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The people should properly make use of the manifold welfare schemes implemented by the Tamil Nadu Government that follows in the footsteps of Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and work unitedly to create a prosperous Tamil Nadu so that the lives of the people of the State are enriched and their well-being is ensured.

Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami
- Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu

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First Wrapper

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** met Hon'ble Prime Minister of India **Shri Narendra Modi** at the Kanniyakumari Government Guest House on 19.12.2017, informed him of the devastation wrought by the Ockhi cyclone and heavy rains in Kanniyakumari District and presented a Memorandum seeking Central assistance for relief and rehabilitation.

Governor's address seeks redressal of finance panel's 'past injustices'

'Tamil Nadu firmly on path of inclusive growth, social welfare'

Hon'ble Members of the Legislative Assembly,

Vanakkam.

I feel greatly honoured for this opportunity given to me to inaugurate this session of the Fifteenth Legislative Assembly by delivering my maiden speech in this august House. At the outset, I extend my warm New Year and Pongal greetings to all of you and to the people of Tamil Nadu. I am certain that this New Year will usher in a period of sustained economic growth and well being for the people of the State.

2. The Government of Tamil Nadu, under the leadership of the Hon'ble Chief Minister Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami, has steadfastly been adopting the governance paradigm of inclusive socio-economic development and welfare for all. This Government is guided by the vision of the

late Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa and remains firmly on the path set by the visionary leader in its endeavour to create a true welfare State for the people of Tamil Nadu. I am confident that this Government will provide governance par excellence and will formulate policies and implement programmes for attaining economic prosperity and social equity.

3. The last year has been a momentous one for the Nation. We witnessed the introduction of Goods and Services Tax (GST) on 1st July 2017. The earnest preparatory efforts taken by the Union Government and the State Government made the transition to the GST regime fairly smooth. I compliment the State Government for achieving this smooth transition and for its commitment to this major tax regime change, even when faced with the risk of an uncertain effect on the State's revenue initially. This Government is thankful to the Government of India for insulating the State Government from the revenue reduction risk by providing an effective compensation mechanism and thereby helping the States to secure their fiscal position. I am convinced that this historic change will usher in a long term economic growth to the Country and to the State of Tamil Nadu.

4. The Government of Tamil Nadu has always been a fiscally prudent State and has waded comfortably through turbulent waters when faced with economic slowdown. The State's fiscal position has been resilient and continues to be so, despite unexpected setbacks in revenues. Though there is a concern about increasing revenue deficit due to slow growth in revenue receipts, the State is firmly on the path of containing the fiscal deficit and Debt to GSDP

ratio within the norms. Overcoming the present financial difficulties, the State Government has been able to implement the recommendations of the Seventh Pay Commission, honouring its continued commitment to the welfare of its employees and pensioners. This Government is also continuing its public welfare programmes without any curtailment in allocations, thus fulfilling the aspirations of the people of Tamil Nadu.

5. The Government of India has recently constituted the Fifteenth Finance Commission to make recommendations on the devolution of tax resources and grants to the States. Tamil Nadu has unfortunately been treated unfairly by successive Finance Commissions, especially by the Fourteenth Finance Commission, which increased the overall devolution of taxes by the Government of India to the States from 32 per cent to 42 per cent but curtailed the inter-se share of Tamil Nadu in this divisible pool of resources from 4.969 per cent to 4.023 per cent. This has resulted in a loss of nearly Rs.6,000 crore to the State annually. The Government of India has also reduced its financial assistance for many

Centrally Sponsored Schemes, thus leaving it to the State Government to fill this gap from its own resources. As our State did not get the benefit of any additional devolution, it had to bear this additional burden from its own tax revenues. In this backdrop, this Government has high expectations that the Fifteenth Finance Commission, constituted under the chairmanship of Thiru. N. K. Singh, will rectify the past injustice and meet the resource needs required for fulfilling the genuine aspirations of the people of Tamil Nadu by being fair and equitable to this State.

6. I appreciate the sincere and strenuous efforts taken by the Government in co-ordination with the Central Government to save the lives of fishermen who were stranded in the mid sea during the recent 'Ockhi' cyclone. Indeed, the timely and co-ordinated action of the Navy, Coast Guard and Air force with the State Government made the rescue operations effective. I also thank the Hon'ble Prime Minister for visiting Kanniyakumari to reiterate the support and commitment of the Government of India to the rescue and rehabilitation of the victims of 'Ockhi' cyclone and for an on - account release of Rs.133 crore from the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF). I urge the Central Government to expedite the submission of the report by the Central team, which has recently completed its field visits for assessing the damages and sanction the due release of Rs.401 crore for temporary restoration and Rs.4,854 crore for permanent restoration towards damages caused by 'Ockhi' cyclone. The State Government compassionately provided financial assistance to the bereaved families, besides sanctioning input subsidy to the farmers whose crops were damaged, in addition to the support for the re-plantation of rubber and banana. This Government is committed to continuing the rescue operations till the last fisherman is rescued.

7. This Government is unwavering in its commitment to the goals and objectives set in the Tamil Nadu Vision 2023 Document, which is a proud legacy left by the late Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa as a pointer to guide the Government. Tamil Nadu has been making large investments in the social sector,

especially in health, education, child care and social security. The outcome of this sustained strategy has been a healthier population with its youth equipped with employable skill sets. It has also enabled the aged and the other vulnerable sections of the population to achieve a greater sense of economic security. Hence, it is not surprising that the State continues to rank high in all Human Development Indicators.

8. The Government has constituted the 'State Balanced Growth Fund' (SBGF) to bring about a balanced economic development across all regions of the State. This is one of the many novel initiatives taken by this Government, under which 548 projects were approved at an estimated project cost of Rs.348.71 crore covering 105 economically backward blocks in the State. The Government has also undertaken the 'Special Area Development Programme' (SADP) to implement specific projects in hilly regions aimed at livelihood promotion and infrastructure development. These two programmes have contributed immensely to the economic development of the backward areas of the State and helped in reducing the regional disparities within the State.

9. The Government has always been at the forefront in promoting the Tamil language and its reach across the world. I appreciate the laudable initiative taken by the Hon'ble Chief Minister to facilitate the establishment of a Tamil Chair in Harvard University, by committing a grant of Rs.10 crore for promoting research in Tamil language and culture. The institution of the **Sindhanai Sirppi Singara Velar** Award by this Government is a befitting commemoration of the contribution made by him to Tamil literature and will surely encourage Tamil writers expounding scientific concepts, social equality and labour welfare.

10. This Government is guided by the profound wisdom and vision of the late Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa. Her courage, her noble deeds and her invaluable contributions to the development of the State of Tamil Nadu and the welfare of its people will remain etched in golden letters in the annals of contemporary history of Tamil Nadu. I am happy to inform this august House that as a mark of tribute and reverence to this people's leader, the Government has sanctioned the construction of a grand memorial for her on the Marina beach and has also accorded approval to the conversion of 'Veda Nilayam', the residence of the late Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa at Poes Garden in Chennai into a memorial, befitting her stature.

11. This Government has been steadfastly supporting the cause of the Sri Lankan Tamils

and has been vociferously calling upon the Government of India and the international community to prevail upon the Government of Sri Lanka to ensure that the Sri Lankan Tamils live their life with dignity, economic security and adequate political rights. This Government reiterates its demand to bring the perpetrators of genocide and war crimes on innocent Tamils to justice.

12. The Government of Tamil Nadu has always held that maintenance of law and order is the sine-qua-non for economic development. The State Police force continues to be provided with modern equipment and necessary infrastructure. I must congratulate the Government and the people of Tamil Nadu for firmly keeping communal, extremist and religious fundamentalist forces at bay. The Tamil Nadu Police has been keeping a close vigil on anti-social and naxalite elements and has sternly been nipping them in the bud. The State Government will take all steps to sustain this exemplary record of maintenance of public order and peace in the society.

13. This Government has always been unwavering in its commitment to securing the traditional fishing rights of our fishermen in the Palk Bay. The efforts taken by the Central Government have substantially reduced the incidents of unprovoked attacks by the Sri Lankan Navy on our fishermen. I urge the Government of India to impress upon the Sri Lankan Government to release the fishermen and fishing boats under their custody. In this regard, I thank the Central Government for supporting the State Government in its efforts to promote deep sea fishing by sanctioning Rs.200 crore for replacing the existing fishing vessels with tuna longliners. This Government will continue to urge the Union Government to give effect to the firm stand of the late Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa to abrogate the 1974 agreement and retrieve Katchatheevu from Sri Lanka as it will provide a permanent solution to restore the traditional fishing rights of the Indian fishermen.

14. The Government's e-Sevai centres have been providing the common public with easy and hassle free access to avail citizen centric services. More than 190 services are being offered and since inception, 4.53 crore transactions have been carried out through these e-Sevai centres. This Government has rolled out a visionary e-Governance policy which will enable the public to access all Government services through a single State portal in the online mode. Starting with 300 services, all Government services will be delivered online in a span of five years. Under the land records modernization programme, land records and field measurement sketches are being digitized to enable online patta transfer process. This online patta transfer system has made the maintenance of land records completely fair and transparent and has increased the accessibility of such services to the common people.

15. Growth in agriculture and allied sector is essential for equitable distribution of benefits of overall economic development to the rural population. The Government of Tamil Nadu has adopted a multipronged approach to increase farm productivity and augment farmers' income. Multitude of steps are being taken by this Government to increase agricultural productivity, which include promoting mechanization in farming by subsidizing agricultural implements and Micro Irrigation in a big way. The Government is also implementing the cluster based **'Mission on Sustainable Dry Land Agriculture'** that holistically addresses all issues relating to dry land farming. This has helped to increase the area under food crops including millets and pulses to 74.6 lakh acres during 2017-2018. The Government is also implementing an innovative **'Collective Farming Scheme'** to enable small and marginal farmers to work together and enhance their bargaining power to enjoy the benefit of economies of scale in agricultural operations. I appreciate the initiative of the Government to protect the interests of the coconut farmers by permitting extraction of 'Neera' from coconut trees. **As yet another initiative, this Government is also planning to launch 'Integrated Farming Scheme' for promoting mixed farming to increase farm productivity and farmers' income in the ensuing Budget.**

16. The Government is also implementing a project on 'Supply Chain Management of Fruits, Vegetables and other Perishables' in 10 Districts with a financial outlay of Rs.398.75 crore. Under this scheme, an integrated supply chain infrastructure is being developed by aggregating the produce of farmers at 487 Collection Points, processing them at 29 Primary Processing Centres and selling them in 34 Main Markets, thus rendering logistical support, cold storage and warehousing facilities. The initiative of the Government to upgrade and introduce e-trading in 30 Regulated Markets and 8 Agricultural Producers Co-operative Marketing Societies at an estimated cost of Rs.102.84 crore will facilitate modernization of our markets and their integration with the National Agricultural Markets.

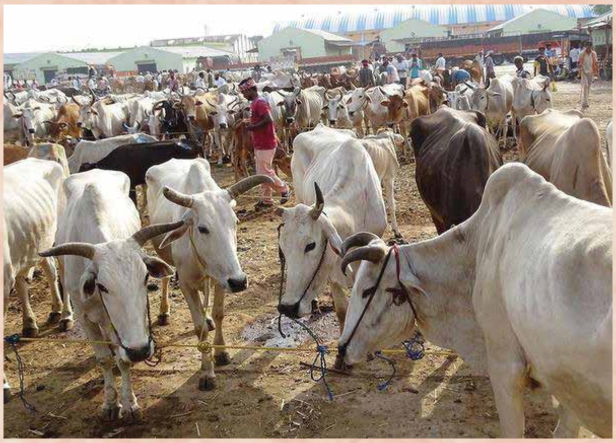
17. Agricultural activity is subject to the vagaries of monsoon. Due to the sustained efforts of the Government, 15.36 lakh farmers were enrolled under the 'Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana' in the year 2016-2017 to mitigate the weather risk. This stupendous effort has placed Tamil Nadu among the top States in the implementation of this flagship scheme of the Government of India. Consequently, compensation was sanctioned to 9.28 lakh farmers in the last 'Rabi' season and an amount of Rs.2,478 crore was disbursed as compensation for the loss of paddy, pulses, millets and other crops. **In the coming year, this Government will further increase the coverage of farmers to broad base the benefits of this scheme.**

18. Animal husbandry being an important sector to boost rural economy, this Government will continue to implement the flagship programme of free distribution of milch cows, sheep and goats to improve the livelihoods of the rural poor. The Government continues to strengthen veterinary infrastructure which

forms the foundation of the Animal Husbandry sector in the State.

19. The State Government is steadfast in securing the legitimate rights of Tamil Nadu in various inter-State river water disputes. It was due to the untiring and unrelenting efforts of the late Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa that the historic feat of raising the water level of the Mullai Periyar Dam to 142 feet could be achieved. This Government is committed to further raising the maximum water level of the dam to the Full Reservoir Level of 152 feet. The Government of Tamil Nadu continues to urge the Government of India to expedite the constitution of the Cauvery Management Board and the Cauvery Water Regulation Committee to fulfil the long standing legitimate demand of the State. I am glad that the Hon'ble Union Minister of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation has assured support to the interlinking of rivers scheme for diverting surplus water from Godavari river through Godavari-Krishna-Pennar-Palar-Cauvery link so as to realise 125 TMC feet of water at Grand Anaicut across Cauvery. I am confident that this initiative will give a major stimulus to our effort in interlinking of peninsular rivers.

20. With the noble objective of conserving and effectively managing the limited water resources of the State, the Government has revived the practice of **'Kudimaramath'**. Indeed, the efforts taken by the Hon'ble Chief Minister personally in implementing Kudimaramath and permitting farmers to use the silt from tank bed for agricultural purposes have helped us to store more water during the recent rains. The Government is committed to continuing this scheme with enhanced allocation in the coming years. The State is also implementing the 'Tamil Nadu Irrigated Agriculture Modernization Project' with the financial assistance of the World Bank to rehabilitate tanks and increase ground water recharge. The 'Climate Change Adaptation Programme', being implemented with the funding from the Asian Development Bank for mitigating the impact of climate change in the Vennar sub-basin of the Cauvery Delta, is expected to improve groundwater recharge.



21. The Government of Tamil Nadu has always been a model welfare State and its policy of Universal Public Distribution System has ensured an effective and functional food safety net. The State is committed to supplying rice free of cost and sugar, dal and palm oil at subsidized prices to all eligible card holders, thus shielding the poor from rising prices of these essential commodities. **Akin to last year, all the rice card holders are being provided with Pongal gift hampers consisting of one kilogram of raw rice, one kilogram of sugar and other items, this year also.** It is the endeavour of this Government to ensure a fair

and transparent system that provides hassle free service delivery in the Public Distribution System and its efforts in this regard to distribute Aadhaar linked smart cards have been well received by the general public. It is heartening to note that the Government has distributed smart cards to 1.88 crore families already, out of the 1.94 crore families enrolled under the Public Distribution System.

22. It was with unflinching resolve that the late Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa brought about a turn around in the power situation and enabled the State to become power surplus today. This Government will tirelessly pursue the goal of adding 13,000 MW of thermal power to the State's generating capacity. Works for installing an additional capacity of 6,200 MW are underway and new projects for an additional capacity of 9,300 MW are in the pipeline. Tamil Nadu reigns as the forerunner among the States in the production of renewable energy and contributes 18 per cent of the total installed capacity of renewable energy in the Country. Despite the difficult financial position faced by the State Government, it has taken over the debt of TANGEDCO to the tune of Rs.22,815 crore under the Government of India's UDAY scheme and this has improved the financial health of the power utility.

23. The State Government recognizes that high quality road infrastructure is essential to efficiently move goods and services across regions to promote faster economic development. Hence, the Government has been taking up major road infrastructure works under the 'Comprehensive Road Infrastructure Development Programme'. The innovative model of 'Performance Based Maintenance Contract' (PBMC) system has helped in maintaining the critical network of roads with high quality. The second phase of the 'Tamil Nadu Road Sector Project', being implemented with loan assistance from the World Bank, is also contributing to the improvement of the road network. I am glad to note that the Government has decided to transfer 7,964 kilometre length of 2,596 Panchayat and Panchayat Union roads from rural local bodies to Highways for upgrading them to the standards of Other District Roads. In the first phase, Rs.608 crore has been sanctioned during 2017-2018 to upgrade 1,436 kilometre of roads for which works are in progress.

credit linkages to eradicate poverty. As the next step, the State Government will be systematically organizing micro-enterprises at the PLFs and federating them to create producer companies through the World Bank funded 'TamilNadu Rural Transformation Project'(TNRTP). The World Bank has recently approved $100 million of loan for this project which aims to promote entrepreneurship and rural enterprises in 26 Districts of the State. Similarly, the Government has taken up the activity of creating new SHGs in urban areas through the National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM) and the Tamil Nadu Urban Livelihood Mission (TNULM).

24. Considering the importance of the upgradation of the East Coast Road as a four lane National Highway, the State Government has given its in-principle clearance to convert it into a National Highway. A proposal has been mooted for the four-laning of NH-45A of the East Coast Road in the first phase and upgradation of the remaining stretches from Nagapattinam to Kanniyakumari in the next phase. The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu has personally reiterated the importance of implementing this project to the Hon'ble Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Shipping and Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation. I am hopeful that the Government of India will take up this work for speedy implementation.

25. The State Government has been effectively addressing the twin challenges of poverty and unemployment in a systematic and holistic manner. The State has been organising Self Help Groups (SHGs), Village Poverty Reduction Committees (VPRCs) and Panchayat Level Federations (PLFs) on the 'Pudhu Vaazhvu' model in all the Districts of Tamil Nadu, and is providing them with

26. The Tamil Nadu Skill Development Mission has been closely working with industries in the State to identify skill gaps and conduct training for improving the employability of our youth. The Government has already launched a scheme with hub and spoke model, centred at Anna University, to train educated youth with upgraded skills with the collaboration of Siemens Limited. The Government is in the process of creating apex level training centres with the loan assistance from Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA) to network field training institutions in the State in five identified sectors, namely, automobile and automobile components, tourism and hospitality, healthcare, logistics and manufacturing of capital goods. These apex level training institutions will be managed

by respective industrial consortium and will impart training to master trainers, network with the field level training centres and impart higher level skill training to youth for their easy absorption into industries. I am confident that this approach will prepare the educated youth for immediate absorption into various industries and will also reduce the skill deficit faced by industries.

27. I compliment the Government of Tamil Nadu and the people of this State for their active participation in the 'Swachh Bharat Mission', which was launched by the Hon'ble Prime Minister and its implementation is being pursued by him personally with a missionary zeal. During my tours in the State, I witnessed the commendable work done by the State Government in implementing this Mission. It is commendable that 16 Districts in the State have achieved the open defecation free (ODF) status under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin). I am confident that the State of Tamil Nadu will be able to achieve even higher levels of accomplishment in realizing the National goals under the Swachh Bharat Mission.

28. The State Government is fully committed to continuously upgrading the urban infrastructure to cater to the needs of the growing urban population in Tamil Nadu. I am happy to note that the Central Government's 'Smart Cities' and 'Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation' (AMRUT) schemes are being implemented with full fervour. The Government of India has approved 10 cities in Tamil Nadu under the 'Smart Cities' programme and 33 urban local bodies under the AMRUT scheme for the upgradation of urban infrastructure. I am glad to inform this august House that so far, the Government of India has released Rs.828 crore and Rs.951 crore for Smart Cities and AMRUT schemes respectively. The State is also implementing the World Bank funded 'Tamil Nadu Sustainable Urban Development

Project (TNSUDP)' thus giving a further impetus to urban infrastructure development in the State.

29. This Government is committed to creating slum-free cities and hut-free villages in the State. Towards achieving this objective, a Mission for housing for the poor has been launched to systematically bridge the gap between the demand and supply of both rural and urban housing in Tamil Nadu. The State is in the forefront in the Country in constructing free houses for the rural poor under the 'Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY Gramin)' and the 'Chief Minister's Solar Powered Green House Scheme'. Since the inception of PMAY (Urban) scheme, the Government of India has approved the construction of 3.84 lakh housing units at a total project cost of Rs.14,462 crore. I thank the Central Government for releasing Rs.1,498 crore so far under this scheme.

30. The Government has already constituted a 'Shelter Fund' for raising funds to provide housing to the urban poor. Legislation will be brought in the current session of the Assembly to enable the levy of shelter charges. The Town and Country Planning Act, 1971 will also be suitably amended to provide statutory backing for the issue of 'Transferable Development Rights' (TDR) to appropriately compensate those who give up their land for urban development projects like road widening. A secondary market for TDRs will also be developed through an appropriate mechanism. Following the enactment of the 'Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act' (RERA) by the Parliament, the State Government has also notified the RERA Rules. This is expected to regulate the real estate sector effectively and thus protect the interests of the consumers.

31. The Chennai Metro Rail has emerged as a boon to the people of the Chennai metropolis and has been gaining immense popularity. It is expected that the remaining part of the underground sections of Phase-I of the Chennai Metro Rail Project will be operational in stages by the end of 2018. The Phase-I extension, covering a length of 9 kilometre from Washermenpet to Thiruvotriyur / Wimco Nagar, is also under implementation. Three more metro rail corridors covering a total distance of 107.5 kilometre under Phase-II of the Chennai Metro

Rail Project at an estimate of Rs.79,962 crore have been approved and recommended by the State Government to the Government of India for obtaining external aid. I request the Central Government to accord early approval for Phase-II of the Chennai Metro Rail Project.

32. The State Government is committed to improving the ease of doing business in Tamil Nadu and as a first step towards honouring this commitment, the 'Tamil Nadu Business Facilitation Ordinance, 2017' has been promulgated on 28th October 2017 and the bill for enacting it will be introduced in the legislature in the current session. As yet another major structural reform initiative, the Hon'ble Chief Minister has launched a web based Online Single Window Clearance Portal on 2nd November 2017 that enables investors to obtain the required clearances and renewals across 11 Departments. The Business Facilitation Act, when enacted by this august House, will further strengthen the Single Window Clearance System by stipulating timelines for approval and providing for deemed approval for certain clearances. The Government has also constituted a High level Committee to monitor the disposal of the applications within specified timelines and to act as a grievance redressal forum for investors.

33. The Hon'ble Members would recall that the first Global Investors Meet in Tamil Nadu was held in Chennai in September 2015. It was a grand event in which 98 Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) were signed with investors, committing a total investment of Rs.2.42 lakh crore in the State across different sectors. I am happy to note that 61 projects that will generate 96,341 jobs and with a total investment of Rs.62,738 crore are presently under implementation. The Government is actively pursuing the remaining project proposals by providing facilitation services to the investors through the 'Tamil Nadu Industrial Guidance and Export Promotion Bureau' for obtaining statutory clearances.

34. As Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) provide large scale employment opportunities, this Government accords high priority for promoting them. Special focus is on the twin goals of promoting entrepreneurship and skill building. The novel initiative of the 'New Entrepreneurship-cum-Enterprise Development Scheme' (NEEDS) has created a favourable climate for budding entrepreneurs to build start-up enterprises in the State. The Government has taken up the development of four MSME cluster development projects under the second phase of the JICA funded 'Tamil Nadu Investment Promotion Programme' (TNIPP) for establishing infrastructure parks for supporting and handholding MSME business. The policy

of extending financial assistance to private investors and industrial associations, in collaboration with 'Tamil Nadu Small Industries Development Corporation' (TANSIDCO), for promoting new industrial estates will continue.

35. Tamil Nadu has always been at the forefront in the Country in providing quality health care and enabling people to lead a healthy life. The State has already achieved the Millennium Development Goals set by the United Nations and the National targets way before the other States, and is also poised to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals much ahead of the deadline of 2030. This has been made possible only due to the sustained proactive efforts taken by the State Government in strengthening the public health care system in the State. The 'Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme' (CMCHIS), a flagship programme of the Government, has made great strides in providing timely and quality in-patient care to the poor and the needy families, thus insulating them from sudden financial shocks due to medical emergencies. 'Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy Maternity Benefit Scheme' has substantially improved the health status of the pregnant women and the new born. The other novel initiatives of the State Government, namely 'Menstrual Hygiene Programme', 'Amma Baby Care Kit' and 'Amma Magapperu Sanjeevi' will continue. I compliment the State of Tamil Nadu for being recognized as the best performing State in the Country in implementing the Cadaver Transplant Programme and for having received the National Award for the best performance in deceased organ transplantation for three years consecutively from 2015 to 2017.

36. Considering the views already put forth by this Government to safeguard the interests of our State, students and doctors, this Government requests the Government of India to bring in necessary amendments to the National Medical Commission Bill, which is likely to have a huge impact on the health sector.

37. In pursuance of its commitment to provide quality education to every child, the Government is continuously upgrading and strengthening the school infrastructure in the State. In order to make school education more affordable and to ensure hundred per cent enrolment of students, the Government has been implementing a slew of programmes for providing all the essential study materials like books, notebooks and laptops, four sets of

uniform, school bags, footwear, bus passes and bicycles to students free of cost, in addition to providing special cash incentives to reduce the number of drop-outs. 'The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009' is being implemented earnestly to enable the children from socially and economically backward families to get quality education in private institutions as well. I appreciate that this Government responded positively to emerging challenges by upgrading and improving the curriculum in schools at all levels, besides swiftly arranging special coaching for students to equip them for effectively facing various competitive examinations. I am confident that the institution of 'Puthumai Palli' and 'Kanavu Aasiriyar' awards will motivate innovation and improve the teaching quality, in Government schools.

38. The State Government has been taking concerted efforts to make higher education accessible and affordable to all sections of the people in the State. These efforts have borne fruit, resulting in Tamil Nadu emerging as the top most State in the Country with regard to Gross Enrolment Ratio in higher education. For providing more opportunities to students, 268 new courses have been introduced in Government Arts and Science Colleges and 89 new courses have been introduced in University constituent colleges. In order to improve the quality of higher education, the Government has been continuously upgrading the physical infrastructure in colleges. During this year, Rs.210 crore has been sanctioned by the State to upgrade the infrastructure in Government colleges. The financial assistance given by this Government towards reimbursing tuition fees to the first generation graduates has improved the access to higher education for the students belonging to the economically weaker families.

39. I appreciate the State for providing an effective social security net encompassing all the vulnerable sections of the society namely women, children, differently-abled, transgenders, senior citizens and the destitute. This Government will continue to provide financial assistance through marriage assistance schemes and social security pension schemes, and implement the Cradle baby scheme and Integrated Special Homes for senior citizens and destitute children. **The 'Two wheeler scheme for women' will be launched shortly, for which the Government has decided to enhance the subsidy ceiling limit to Rs.25,000/- as against Rs.20,000/- announced earlier.** This Government will continue to provide nutritious variety meals to all school going children through the 'Puratchi

Thalaivar M.G.R. Nutritious Meal Programme' and ensure adequate nutrition for the healthy development of children, adolescent girls, pregnant women and nursing mothers through the implementation of the 'Integrated Child Development Services' (ICDS) Scheme.

40. This Government continues to ensure the security and welfare of the socially disadvantaged sections of the society such as the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Most Backward Classes, De-notified Communities, Backward Classes and Minorities. With the objective of improving the economic well-being of these disadvantaged sections, the Government is providing economic development assistance for income generating activities through the 'Tamil Nadu Adi Dravidar Housing and Development Corporation' (TAHDCO), the 'Tamil Nadu Backward Classes Economic Development Corporation' (TABCEDCO) and the 'Tamil Nadu Minorities Economic Development Corporation' (TAMCO). The Government has been running special schools and hostels for students belonging to these socially disadvantaged groups and has been constantly upgrading the physical infrastructure of such institutions. These efforts have enabled the State to maintain its status as a frontrunner in ensuring social justice and equity to all sections of the society.

41. **In spite of the immense fiscal stress, keeping the welfare of the Government employees in mind, this Government has already implemented the Pay Revision on the basis of the recommendations of Pay Panel 2017 at an additional cost of Rs.14,719 crore per annum. Many representations are being received from various quarters about the pay revision. This Government will constitute a committee to examine these representations.**

42. The vision of the late Chief Minister J Jayalalithaa was to make the State prosperous and free from poverty, and to ensure social and economic equality. This vision is the guiding principle of this Government headed by the Hon'ble Chief Minister Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami. To fulfil this objective, this Government reiterates its commitment to work tirelessly for the overall development of the State and the welfare of the people.

43. I have summarized the various policies and programmes of this Government. Hon'ble Members, I am confident that this august House will constructively deliberate on the various issues of importance to the State and evolve a consensus so as to reinforce the faith of the people in democratic traditions. I conclude my address by once again extending my warm New Year and Pongal greetings to all the esteemed Members of this august House and the people of Tamil Nadu.

Nandri!

Vanakkam!

Jai Hind!

Chief Minister seeks Rs. 9,302 crore for Ockhi and NE monsoon relief works

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami met the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in Kanniyakumari on 19.12.2017 and thanked him for inspecting the Ockhi cyclone affected areas in the Kanniyakumari District. On the occasion, the Hon'ble Chief Minister presented a Memorandum to the Hon'ble Prime Minister containing a detailed report on damages caused by Ockhi cyclone in Kanniyakumari District and due to continuous rains during North-East Monsoon in different parts of the State. The Memorandum demanded the Central Government to sanction sufficient relief fund for the rehabilitation of affected places in the State.

Immediately after the Ockhi cyclone hit Kanniyakumari District, the Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister and, Hon'ble Ministers of concerned Departments along with 11 senior I.A.S., officers rushed to the District to undertake rescue and relief operations as per the directions of the Hon'ble Chief Minister. Five I.A.S., officers were sent to other States for co-ordination work to bring back stranded

fishermen in other States to their native places. The stranded fishermen in other States were immediately given Rs.2,000/- as food allowance and a maximum of 1,000 litres of furnace oil for their fishing speed boats.

Steps were taken on a war-footing to assess the damage to agricultural land, fishing boats and other implements due to cyclone.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister conducted regular review meetings on a daily basis and expedited the review and relief operations. Due to this, disrupted power supply was restored and distribution of drinking water supply was streamlined. Normal traffic was restored after removing the fallen trees on the roads and repairing the damaged roads. The Hon'ble Chief Minister also conducted a review meeting with the Coast Guard and Indian Air Force personnel for early tracing of the missing fishermen.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister also made a personal visit to Kanniyakumari District on 12.12.2017 to undertake a field-level review. At that time the Hon'ble Chief Minister ordered sanctioning of Rs.20 lakh to the families of deceased fishermen, Rs.5 lakh for rehabilitation of fishermen who were handicapped and Rs.50,000/- to the injured fishermen who were undergoing treatment in hospitals. The Hon'ble Chief Minister announced a livelihood compensation of Rs.5,000/- to the families of fishermen as they could not carry out their work due to cyclone and a special livelihood compensation of Rs.5,000/- to the families of missing fishermen. The Hon'ble Chief Minister assured that one of the family members of deceased fishermen would be given a job in the Government services depending on their qualification. The Government also formed a committee under the chairmanship of Commissioner of Revenue Administration to take legal measures if there was any hurdle in providing relief to the families of missing fishermen. Also, taking into consideration the livelihood of people living in hills, the Hon'ble Chief Minister ordered a livelihood compensation of Rs.5,000/- to each family.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister announced a compensation of Rs. 48,500/- to Rs.63,500/- per hectare to the farmers who lost 33 per cent of their plantain trees, Rs.1 lakh per hectare for the loss of rubber plantations including Rs. 32,000/- for bee keeping, Rs.28,000/- to farmers who lost their clove plantations and adequate relief to those who lost their agricultural and horticultural crops.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister appealed to the Hon'ble Prime Minister to declare the Ockhi Cyclone as National disaster in view of the heavy damages it caused. The Hon'ble Chief Minister also placed a demand for a separate Naval base in Kanniyakumari District with facilities for helicopter landing and communication to trace missing fishermen.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister also handed over a Memorandum containing various demands taking into consideration of the damages caused by the Ockhi cyclone.

1. Immediate sanctioning of Rs.747 crore to the State from the National Disaster Fund.

2. The present relief amount for the victims should be enhanced. The relief amount for the deceased should be increased from Rs.4 lakh to Rs.10 lakh, for the handicapped from Rs.2 lakh to Rs. 5 lakh, for plantain farmers from Rs. 13,500/- to Rs.1,25,000/- per hectare, and for rubber plantations from Rs.18,000/- to Rs.2,50,000/- per hectare.

3. Funds should be sanctioned from the National Disaster Fund for restoring power transmission infrastructure, power changers, sub-stations, and for high power lines carrying power of more than 11 kilowatts, which were damaged in the recent cyclone, storm and heavy rains.

4. 1,500 high frequency wireless sets should be distributed with 90 per cent Central Grant and setting up of high frequency wireless towers along the Tamil Nadu and Central Government's permission to use high frequency.

5. A dedicated satellite radio channel should be set up to give up-to-date weather forecast to fishermen.

6. To find a permanent solution to the problems of fishermen, especially to those in the Kanniyakumari District, an integrated fishing harbour should be set up in the District with communication facilities and fishing processing park. To prevent sea erosion, sea erosion protection walls should be set up and for this work, Rs.428 crore should be sanctioned.

7. Hon'ble Prime Minister should order the Union Ministry of Defence to take all necessary steps to trace the fishermen who have not returned to the shore till date. The search for the missing fishermen, especially those who went to the high seas, should continue till the last fisherman was found.

8. To undertake the relief, rescue and rehabilitation operations, the Central Government should sanction Rs.5,255 crore to the State.

9. The Central Government should sanction Rs.4,047 crore to Tamil Nadu to undertake relief works for the damages caused due to North-East Monsoon in Chennai and coastal areas of the State and to establish permanent measures to prevent such occurrences in future.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister requested the Hon'ble Prime Minister to sanction Rs. 9,302 crore totally on behalf of the Central Government to Tamil Nadu for relief works to undo the damages caused due to Ockhi cyclone in Kanniyakumari District and due to rains and floods caused due to North-East Monsoon in Chennai and other coastal areas of the State.

The Hon'ble Prime Minister sympathetically heard the demands of the Hon'ble Prime Minister and agreed to consider them favourably.

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'Amma rained welfare schemes on Tiruchi District, it will be like Rock Fort in support'

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** at the centenary function of Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. M.G.R. at Tiruchirappalli on 26.10.2017 *(English Translation)*.

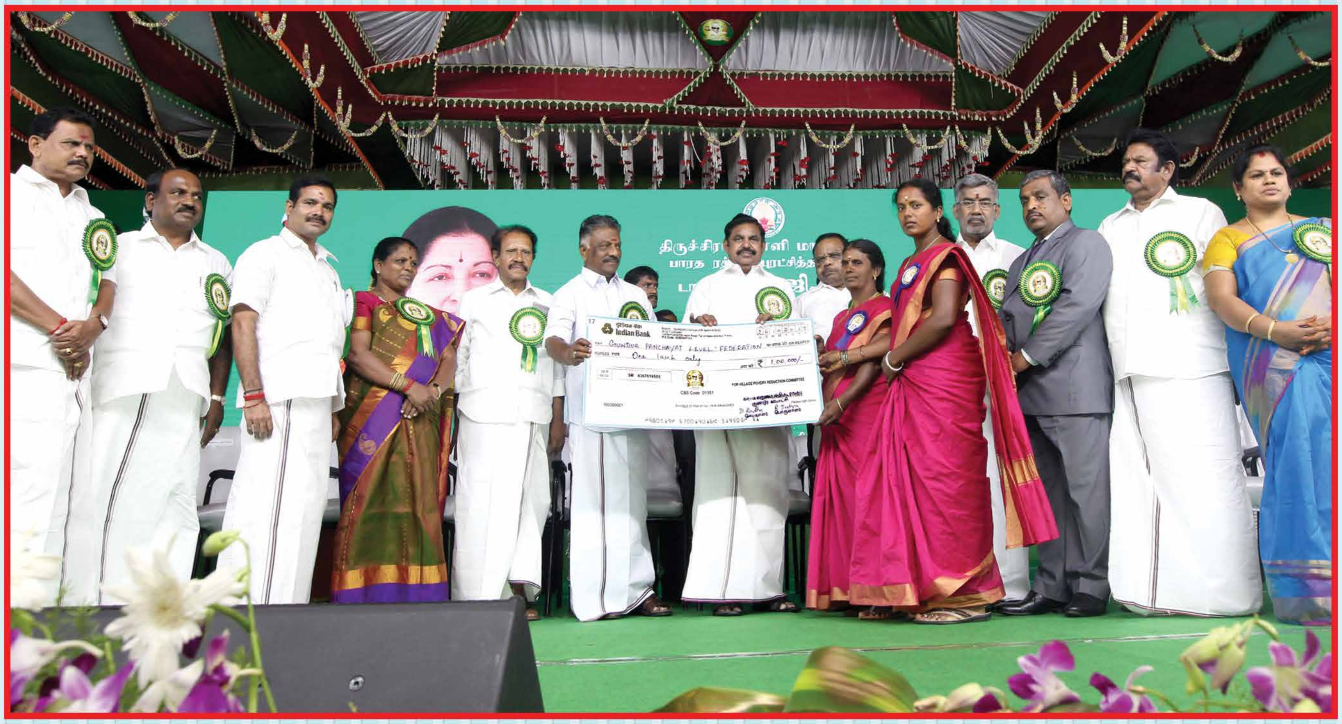
I bow before Goddess Idaya Deivam Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

Hon'ble Speaker of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Thiru. Dhanapal, who delivered the presidential address at the centenary function of Bharata Ratna Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. M.G.R., Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister Thiru. O.Panneerselvam, Hon'ble Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha Dr. Thambidurai who delivered a special address, Hon'ble Minister for Tourism Thiru. Vellamandi N. Natarajan, Hon'ble Minister for Backward Classes and Minorities Welfare Tmt. S.Valarmathi, Secretary to the Department of Tamil Development and Information Thiru. Venkatesan who delivered the welcome address, Rajya Sabha Member Thiru. T.Rathinavel, Tiruchirappalli Member of Parliament Thiru. P. Kumar, Thiru. R.P. Marutharaja, Manappaarai MLA Thiru. R.Chandrasekar, Musiri MLA Thiru. M.Selvarasu, Tmt. M.Parameswari, Hon'ble Ministers, Hon'ble Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Thiru. Pollachi V.Jayaraman, Government Whip Thiru.S. Rajendran, Tamil Nadu Government's Special

Representative at New Delhi Thiru.N.Thalavai Sundaram, Chairperson of the Tamil Nadu Text Books and Educational Services Corporation Tmt. B. Valarmathi, Chairman of the Tamil Nadu Housing Board, Thiru. P.K.Vairamuthu, Tiruchirappalli District Collector Thiru. K. Rajamani, Rajya Sabha Member Thiru. R.Vaithilingam, MPs and MLAs, Executives of the Party Headquarters, former Ministers, former MPs and MLAs, Representatives of Co-operative Institutions, former representatives of Local Bodies, Party Cadre who are the aerial roots of the party, Government Staff, Respected Elders, Ladies, Youths, Welfare scheme beneficiaries, Media friends –at the outset, I pay my respects to all of you.

Tiruchirappalli is a model District with multi-facets like education, arts, agriculture, industry, spirituality and tourism. It is said that a Jain monk 'Sira' stayed and did penance in the Tiruchi rockfort cave and the place came to be known as Thiru- Sira – Palli and this changed, by efflux of time, into Tiruchirappalli. This place was ruled by Cheras, Cholas, Pandyas, Vijayanagar emperors and Poligars and had often been a battlefield. Karikal Chozhan constructed the Grand Anaicut to harness water from going waste into the sea and to divert it to the delta Districts. We can be proud that a Tamilian, Karikal Chozhan was the first in the world to hit upon the technology of constructing a dam across a river and using the waters for irrigation.

Sir C.V.Raman, the first Indian to get the Nobel Prize for Physics was born in Tiruvanaikaval in this District. It is the sacred soil which gave many freedom fighters like Thiruvalargal Va.Ve. Su. Iyer, Dr. T.V.Swaminatha Sastri, Nationalist Aangarai Halasyam, Diwan P.Kalifulla Saheb and Dr. T.S.S.Rajan. This District gave birth to many leaders, intellectuals and artistes like Thiruvalargal K.A.P.Viswanatham, Ayyam Perumal Konar, Communist Leader M.Kalyanasundaram, Nadigavel M.R.Radha, a genius in violin Lalgudi Jayaraman, Kavignar Vali, Kavignar N.Kamarasan, vocalist Tiruchi Loganathan and writer Sujatha. Mahatma Gandhiji visited Tiruchirappalli in 1946.



With many places of worship like Srirangam Arulmigu Ranganathar temple, Samayapuram Mariamman temple, Thiruvanaikaval Akilandeswari temple, Rock Fort Ucchi Pillaiyar temple, Arulmigu Thayumanavar temple, Vekkaliamman temple, St. Joseph Church and Edatheru Sagaya Matha temple, Tiruchirappalli District exudes the fragrance of spirituality. Tiruchirappalli rock fort finds a place in an emblem engraved in the Westminster Abbey, London.

There are many tourist spots like Pachaimalai, Puliyancholai, Melanai, Mukkombu, Arignar Anna Planetarium and Rani Mangammal Kolu Mandapam in this District.

The prime occupation in this District is agriculture and weaving. It is known for muslin fabric and sarees. The bullocks of Manapparai in this District are famous for their use in ploughing. Tiruchi has progressed as an industrial District also with the Golden Rock Railway workshop, BHEL, Ordnance factory and Tamil Nadu Newsprint and Papers Ltd., Jewellery craft in gold, silver, precious and semi precious stones also flourishes in Tiruchirappalli. Sugar factories and many small-scale industrial sheds take care of providing job opportunities. Tiruchirappalli District which has many more glories and heritage significance, also finds a special place in political history. In the biography of Ponmana Chemmal, the incomparable leader of World Tamils, Tiruchirappalli District occupies many pages. Likewise, Tiruchirappalli cannot be removed from the life history of our Family Deity, Tamil Nadu's beacon light Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. arranged a grand dance performance at his own expense at Karur for raising funds for the Thiruparaithurai Sri Ramakrishna Kudil, Tiruchirappalli District; the dance was to be performed by our Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. The total collections through the event were donated by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. to the Sri Ramakrishna Kudil. Thirumuruga Kripananda Variyar who presided over the function conferred

the title 'Ponmana Chemmal' on Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. in appreciation of his philanthropic nature. On the same dais, Thirumuruga Kripananda Variyar honoured Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma also with the title 'Naattiya Kalaamani'. The presentation of two titles that reflect the qualities and heart of our party's two great leaders happened at Sri Ramakrishna Kudil in Tiruchirappalli District and this is an additional glory to this District.

I am proud to state that the first general council meeting and the first State Conference of the All India Anna DMK party took place in this District. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. inaugurated the new scheme of 'Oru Kaala Poojai' for small temples with no adequate resources (ritual adoration of the Deity at least once a day) in Samayapuram in this District.

Unable to study beyond the second standard due to poverty, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar joined a drama company. His mother got him and his brother admitted in the drama company in the belief that her sons would get meals there. But the company rule was that meals should be served only for those who would be performing that day in the theatre. Unaware of this rule, the child artist Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R., one day, sat along with other actors for the lunch to appease his hunger. The Manager of the drama troupe company, noted this and forcibly evicted Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. from the row, saying, "You are not acting in today's performance; so no meals for you". That painful experience of leaving the place with hunger, brought about the feeling in Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. that children – school-going children – should have full nutritious meals. And that paved the way for the implementation of the Nutritious Meals Scheme after Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. became the Chief Minister. The place Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. chose to inaugurate this precious scheme was Kaattur Paappaakurichi in Tiruchirappalli District. The image of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. sitting along with children and taking food has become historic today. This is one more proof of Hon'ble Puratchi

Thalaivar M.G.R.'s affection and respect for Tiruchirappalli District.

When Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R.'s Government was dismissed in 1980, the place where he directly sought justice from people was at a public meeting held inTiruchirappalli.

Tamils all over the world know very well that Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. had great respect for Tamil scholars and Tamil language. Muthamizh Kavalar K.A.P. Viswanatham placed two demands before Hon'ble Chief Minister Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. - a World Tamil Conference should be held and an exclusive University for Tamil language should be established. Puratchi Thalaivar fulfilled both these demands by successfully conducting a World Tamil Conference at Madurai, the seat of first Sangam for fostering Tamil and by setting up a Tamil University at Thanjavur, in the Chola Mandalam. This also reveals Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R.'s regard for Muthamizh Kavalar K.A.P.Viswanatham of Tiruchirappalli District.

The acme of Tiruchirappalli District's glories was Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's selection of Srirangam for contesting the election for the Legislature and assuming the Chief Ministership of Tamil Nadu after the election. "Every Constituency in Tamil Nadu is my Constituency; still, this is my own Constituency", Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had stated. "Though I rule from Fort St. George in Chennai, my thoughts revolve around Tiruchi Rock Fort only" – said Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma about Tiruchirappalli District. "You and I are not different; I am (what I am) because of you; I am for you; I am your beloved sister. Srirangam is my ancestral place; in that way, I belong to this Srirangam soil and the people of Srirangam" - Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma vowed, and functioned accordingly.

Your District Minister Hon'ble Brother Vellamandi Natarajan spoke in detail of the great things Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had done to Tiruchirappalli District during her rule. I am happy to share some of them with you on this pleasant occasion.

Day-long Annadhanam for devotees at Srirangam Arulmigu Aranganathar temple;

‘Yatri Nivas’ at Srirangam Velli Mutham Village for 1,000 devotees to stay at a time; a National law school on 25 acre land at a cost of Rs.100 crore at Kuttapatti and at a cost of Rs. 40 crore a Horticultural College for Women and Research Institute and Polytechnic – in this way colleges were opened creating a condition for the poor and downtrodden people to study higher education at low cost; a check dam across Cauvery was built near Kambarasampettai at a cost of Rs.32 crore; the Tamil Nadu Newsprint and Papers Ltd., Established at a cost of Rs.1,650 crore, is functioning, providing employment to thousands of people in this District; a super-speciality hospital is functioning at Tiruchirappalli at a cost of Rs 100 crore); a four-lane high rise bridge across Coleroon river in the model of Napier bridge at a cost of Rs.75 crore; a combined water supply scheme at a cost of Rs.49 crore with the waters of Cauvery river as the source for rural habitations; a central commercial complex for vegetables, fruits and flowers at a cost of Rs.77 crore at Kallikudi Village; a high rise circular bridge at a cost of Rs.82 crore near Tiruchirappalli railway junction; a railway overbridge near Oyamari, Cauvery South Bank at a cost of Rs. 53 crore and many such schemes. Hon’ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma gave welfare schemes like a summer cloudburst, welfare assistance like water gushing out of the opened sluice gates and development schemes like the waters of a perennial river. These immersed the people of Tiruchirappalli in a sea of happiness. All those visionary schemes continue to benefit the people of Tiruchirappalli greatly even now. Tiruchirappalli District has occupied greater space in the first two chapters of All India Anna DMK. We, as the third chapter, are ruling in the path shown by those two great leaders and we plan schemes for Tiruchirappalli District, keeping in mind the views of those leaders and your aspirations. Accordingly, many Government schemes have been implemented in Tiruchirappalli District successfully in the last six years.

I feel it will be appropriate to say this at this juncture. The Leader of the Opposition, M.K.Stalin often laments and asks what schemes people got under this Government and how they benefited the people. During press meets, he criticizes our party and our rule. Likewise, leaders of other opposition parties also refer to this. So, to enlighten them, we want to enumerate, with statistics, the works carried out in Tiruchirappalli District during the rule of Hon’ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

Small and micro farmers’ pending loans to co-operative banks to the tune of Rs.279.87 crore have been waived, benefiting 63,876 farmers; 1,79,242 laptops worth Rs.251 crore have been distributed to students under the free laptop distribution scheme; under the marriage assistance scheme for educated poor women, 31,119 women have been given a cash assistance of Rs.110.10 crore and 124.45 kg gold; 12,693 green houses with solar panel have been constructed at a cost of Rs.250.63 crore and distributed; 13,565 works have been taken up at a cost of Rs.132.09 crore in 2,210 hamlets under the THAI scheme; under the Prime Minister’s Housing Scheme, 19,244 houses have been constructed and distributed at a cost of Rs.241.82 crore; direct bank loan to the extent of Rs.762 crore have been issued to 26,144 women self-help groups; new power schemes have been implemented at eight places at a cost of Rs.77.11 crore by the Tamil Nadu Electricity Generation and Distribution Corporation; under the Highways Department’s (Construction and Maintenance) scheme, roads have been maintained at a cost of Rs.528.45 crore; a statue was installed

at Kambarasampettai for 'Mozhipoar Thiyagi' Keezhapazhuvur Chinnasamy and was declared open by Hon'ble Amma on 08.02.2016; under the 'Kudimaramathu' scheme, 58 works have been completed at a cost of Rs.4.03 crore; in the current year, 75 works are being executed at a cost of Rs.9.71 crore; under the free distribution of sediment sand to farmers scheme, 9,86,187 cubic meter sand have been distributed from 261 lakes to 19,394 farmers; as input subsidy, Rs.63.95 crore have been distributed to farmers whose crop yields have been affected, benefiting 1,04,082 farmers.

Besides, I have inaugurated today 13 works of the Tamil Nadu Electricity Generation and Distribution Corporation, worth Rs.212 crore, inclusive of 3 schemes costing Rs.197.65 crore; laid foundation for 45 works costing Rs.457.31 crore, inclusive of black topping of roads in Tiruchirappalli Municipal Corporation area costing Rs.350 crore; and welfare assistance to an extent of Rs.101.88 crore, are to be distributed today to 32,361 beneficiaries.

From the date of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's Government taking administrative responsibility till date, I have inaugurated 34,926 completed works across the State, costing Rs.10,497.32 crore and laid foundation for 6,766 works worth Rs.3,529.51 crore. Totally, 41,692 works worth Rs.14,026.83 crore are under implementation.

Tiruchirappalli District enjoyed the love and affection of both Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. and Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma; for the latter, it is the native District in addition. In sum, like the age-old unshakeable spiritual fort of Rock Fort, Tiruchirappalli District will remain as the unshakeable fort of AIADMK even though years may roll by indefinitely. The schemes bestowed by these two great leaders, will pave the way for that. There is no doubt that after them, the plans of this Government that follows their footsteps, will make this District prosper further.

AIADMK is formed for the people; works for the people and is a party that sacrifices for the people. The inspiring voice of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. and the heroic voice of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma alone should echo in your ears; your eyes should capture the loving faces of these two great leaders only. Serve the people always as if it is the only duty you have; assimilate in your heart the lines of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar's song – "Kaattil Nilavaai, Kadalil Mazhaiyaai Piranthaal Yaarukku Laabam; Pagaiyil Thunaiyai, Pasiyil Unavaai Irundhaal, Oorukku Laabam" ('What is the use if one is like moonlight in the forest or like rains over the sea?; when one supports others in times of danger and is like food when others are hungry, society will gain'). You, as the party cadre work with unity and with the same aim; your unity will strengthen this party and Government.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar has stressed the necessity of our unity with his song: "Oru Thaai Makkal Naam enbom/ Ondre Engal Kulamenbom/ Thalaivan Oruvan Thaan Enbom/ Samarasam Engal Vaazhvenbom"('Let us say we are children of the same mother; our lineage is one and the same; our leader is one only and our life is based on harmony'). Partymen in the other camp know that unity among the cadres is the main reason for the AIADMK remaining as an iron fortress. I lovingly request you to serve the people unitedly without giving room for the opponents at any time to create division amongst us. Other parties are blaming us without any basis and out of malice. Those who are prone to blame others will continue to blame us; they

cannot give out any solutions. When I say this, I am reminded of a story.

There was a very famous painter in a town and students from all places used to flock to him to learn. Some used to stay with him. One such learner took leave of his teacher after completing his training. He was seized with a desire to self-evaluate his skills in painting. He drew a picture out of his imagination, placed it in the central part of the town with the idea of knowing what others think of his painting. He also wrote down a note, requesting those who found fault with his picture, to mark with an 'X' sign the place where they felt the mistake had occurred, hung a pen also at the spot and left. After some days, he returned to the place to know people's assessment of his painting. The 'X' sign was all over the picture. Some had recorded: "Is this painting worth seeking an opinion about?" The painter was depressed and felt he was not a skilled painter.

He showed the picture to his teacher. The teacher encouraged him thus: "You are an excellent painter. You can draw a picture where no one can find a fault". He asked the youth to draw another picture. As per his teacher's instruction, he placed the picture in a public place and left a note in a placard: "If anyone finds a mistake in this painting, rectify it with the brush left nearby. I offer my heartfelt gratitude to those who rectify the defects they find in the painting". He also left a brush nearby.

After some days, the youth returned to the place with his teacher. What a surprise! The painting was not corrected at any place. The teacher then said: "It is difficult to do a job; but it is easy to criticize it. So when you invited criticism of your first picture, all people criticized it. When you entrusted the job of rectifying the mistakes in the picture to the fault-finders themselves, all people went away enjoying the painting taking the view that there is no mistake at all. So, place full faith on your skills and work," advised the teacher. The youth regained confidence in his efficiency. He said: "I have understood the world and the people. I will act accordingly hereafter".

Let the fault-finders continue their job. They can do only that. It is enough if we derive satisfaction in the work we do. Saint Poet Valluvar also says: "Solluthal yaarkkum eliyavaam, ariyavaam solliya vannam seyal" ('It is easy for all to say something; it is difficult to act as one says').

Hence I affirm: "We will continue to work, on the path shown by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. and with the blessings of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and with the motto –our duty is to work - for the upliftment of the poor, marginalized and middle class people".

Nowadays, the Leader of the Opposition is criticizing our rule all the time. He always describes this Government as a horse-trading Government. We don't know whom he alludes to. Because, you all know that the judgment is going to be delivered shortly. Then people will know in whose regime horse-trading took place. Also, Stalin is making, nowadays, ever new discoveries. The climate changes during the rainy season. It is natural people are afflicted with fever. This is a routine phenomenon. People too get treated for that. Now dengue fever has struck. When he gives interviews over this fever, he dubs this Government as 'Dengue Rule'. So, I think, he has only limited intelligence and skills. It is natural to suffer from fever. One can appreciate if he gives a remedy for the problem. Instead, how far is it justified to be sarcastic over it? We have to ponder. As far as this Hon'ble Amma's Government is concerned, it is vigilant. We

have created conditions for immediate treatment and cure for dengue patients. We have provided needed facilities. We have appointed sufficient Doctors and Nurses.

Dengue is a disease that comes from mosquito bites during day time. The mosquitoes breed in good water. Dengue can be cured by identifying it immediately after the outbreak of the fever, through blood test in Government/private hospital and taking treatment for it. Fever is natural. As far as our Government is concerned, we have given utmost importance to it and directed all the District Collectors to take immediate action. Besides, Department Secretaries have been put in charge District-wise to find out the prevalence of the fever in the District concerned and take remedial action. I wish to point out, dengue fever is abating gradually. Amma's Government is ever vigilant. As the dengue mosquito breeds in good water, members of the public who have come here, party executives and volunteers should spread awareness among the people. Water should be stored in closed vessels. Otherwise the dengue mosquito will lay eggs in it. So people extend full co-operation to prevent the fever. Without public co-operation, no scheme can be implemented. If the dengue mosquito is to be eradicated totally, Government needs public co-operation. With your total co-operation, we will eradicate it completely.

We have executed many schemes during the regimes of Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. and Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. At the same time, ponder what the DMK had done in its rule. Make a comparative study between what they did to the State and what our two great leaders have done. Take Tiruchirappalli District itself. Your District Minister, who spoke earlier to me, listed the great benefits that accrued to the District out of the schemes implemented by Amma's Government. Can you say even one such thing was done in DMK's rule. Think over it. I am proud to say that this District is progressing due to the schemes given by these two great leaders.

When the Congress Party was ruling at the Centre, the DMK was a partner in it. Did it lend its voice when the Cauvery issue cropped up then. Did they take any steps to set up the Cauvery Management Board. No. They enjoyed the power vested in them. They demanded and got the Departments of their choice. They did not bother even an iota about the people of Tamil Nadu. But Puratchi Thalaivi Amma waged a court battle and today, we have got a conducive situation through the Supreme Court, for the setting up of the Cauvery Management Board. Tiruchirappalli District depends on Cauvery for its irrigational needs. I am duty bound to say that it is Amma's Government which got a solution through the Supreme Court after waging court battles.

After the conclusion of the function, general public, volunteers, women, and youth should go home safely. Particularly to those who go by vehicles, I lovingly request, they should go carefully.

I extend my hearty gratitude to District Ministers, respected brother Vellamandi Natarajan, respected sister Valarmathi and all those MPs and MLAs who worked along with them for the conduct of this function in an excellent and inspiring way as also to the District Collector and the Government Staff. Former Minister Sivapathy organized an All India Kabaddi competition at Tiruchirappalli on behalf of M.G.R. team and added glory to Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. I thank him too.

I take leave of you, saying, that this Government will continue to work for you as a servant.

Yesterday was Ours; Today is Ours; and Tomorrow is also Ours.

Vazhga Anna Naamam! Valarga Puratchi Thalaivar Pugazh! Thodarga Hon'ble Amma's Rule!.

Nandri; Vanakkam.

Special Announcements made at the function for Tiruchirappalli District:

1. A detailed project report has been prepared by a consultant for setting up an integrated bus stand at Kottapattu Village in Tiruchirappalli Municipal Corporation, as announced by Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. After technical and cost estimate scrutiny of the report, an appropriate business model will be decided upon and implemented.

2. Bridges proposed to be constructed by the Highways Department in the District: - a bridge across a wild stream on the Kallakudi-Thaappaay road that branches off from Tiruchi-Chidambaram road; a bridge on the Yerakudi-Mahadevi road; a bridge on Thulukkampatti road; a bridge on Thirupanjali road, Samayapuram, a bridge on Adaikkampatti road, Thuvarankurichi; a bridge on Ilupur-Valanaadu road; a bridge on Pudalaathi-Maaraadi-Kottapalayam road; a bridge on Koppampatti-Viswambal Samudram road; a bridge on Paithampaarai-Serugudi road; and a bridge on Vaalavandhi- Mangalam road via., Thulayanatham.

3. A road over bridge will be constructed on the Chennai-Tiruchirappalli road in the place of the railway level crossing No.226 between the railway stations Kattur and Lalgudi.

4. A flyover will be constructed on Tiruchirappalli – Keezh Kalkandarkottai road over railway level crossing 323 between the railway stations Manjathidal and Tiruverumbur.

5. A road over bridge will be constructed on the Cauvery road in the place of railway level crossing No.249 between the railway stations Srirangam and Tiruchi town.

6. Second stage bypass road will be constructed for Thuraiyur town.

7. The Central Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has approved in principle on 12.05.2017, the upgradation of the 77 km long Tiruchi-Namakkal road (State Highway No. 25) into a National Highway. Action is taken through a unit of the National Highway on the detailed project report prepared for developing this road into a four-lane traffic road.

8. The old Traveller's bungalow at Kovilpatti in Manapparai Constituency will be repaired and renovated.

9. Programmes to be implemented through the Public Health Department: Heart attack treatment sections for early detection of heart attacks and for providing first aid, will be set up in hospitals; drug resistant TB ward will be set up; a new godown for drugs will be set up in Tiruchirappalli City; at the Manapparai Government Hospital, facilities like CT Scan, Laboratory equipment, Dialysis equipment, Endoscope equipment and Chemotherapy for cancer patients will be provided; an integrated Primary Health Service Scheme will be implemented in Manapparai Taluk; a new dentistry section will be started at the Navalpattu Primary Health Centre.

Public Holidays for the Year 2018

Under the "Explanation" to section 25 of the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881 (Central Act XXVI of 1881) read with Notification of the Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, No.20-25-26, Public-1, dated the 8th June 1957, the Government of Tamil Nadu hereby declares, that in addition to "Sundays" expressly defined as Public Holidays in the said "Explanation" the following days shall be Public Holidays for the year 2018.

ANNEXURE

SI.No	Public Holidays	Date	Day
1.	New Year's Day	01.01.2018	Monday
2.	Pongal	14.01.2018	Sunday
3.	Thiruvalluvar Day	15.01.2018	Monday
4.	Uzhavar Thirunal	16.01.2018	Tuesday
5.	Republic Day	26.01.2018	Friday
6.	Telugu New Year's Day	18.03.2018	Sunday
7.	Mahaveer Jayanthi	29.03.2018	Thursday
8.	Good Friday	30.03.2018	Friday
9.	*Annual closing of Accounts for Commercial Banks & Co-operative Banks	01.04.2018	Sunday
10.	Tamil New Year's Day and Dr.B.R.Ambedkar's Birthday	14.04.2018	Saturday
11.	May Day	01.05.2018	Tuesday
12.	Ramzan (Idu'l Fitr)	15.06.2018	Friday
13.	Independence Day	15.08.2018	Wednesday
14.	Bakrid	22.08.2018	Wednesday
15.	Krishna Jayanthi	02.09.2018	Sunday
16.	Vinayakar Chathurthi	13.09.2018	Thursday
17.	Muharram	21.09.2018	Friday
18.	Gandhi Jayanthi	02.10.2018	Tuesday
19.	Ayutha Pooja	18.10.2018	Thursday
20.	Vijaya Dasami	19.10.2018	Friday
21.	Deepavali	06.11.2018	Tuesday
22.	Milad-un-Nabi	21.11.2018	Wednesday
23.	Christmas	25.12.2018	Tuesday

*Applicable only to Commercial Banks and Co-operative Banks in Tamil Nadu.

Chief Minister vows to follow in Amma's footsteps to rid Coimbatore of congestion

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami** in Coimbatore on 01.11.2017 while declaring open an over-bridge constructed by the Highways Department (*English Translation*).

As per the orders of the Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma for construction of over-bridge at a cost of Rs.120 crore, a portion of the bridge is declared open today for the public use. I am happy to announce that the remaining portion of the bridge will also be opened and made available for public use soon. I am glad to inform you that at the centenary celebrations of Ponmana Chemmal Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R., to be held in Coimbatore, more schemes necessary for the Coimbatore District will be announced. Accepting the request of the Hon'ble Minister Thiru. Velumani, belonging to the District, the Government will provide a roundtana here.

The present Government is completing the bridge works as per schedule and declaring them open for the public use. During the previous regime, they began schemes without any proper planning and left them half way. But Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma during her regime was always particular that the schemes should be properly planned and completed as per schedule. She saw to it that there was no delay in making available the completed schemes for public use. Similarly, the present Government,

which follows the footsteps of Amma, is always particular in completing the announced schemes as per schedule and throwing them open for public use. Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Amma announced that the Ukkadam river bridge would commence soon and sanctioned Rs.121 crore for bridge works. Soon tender will be floated for the river bridge and the work will start soon.

Similarly, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma announced that a 9km long high-level bridge would be constructed from Kovai Hospital to Uppilipalayam at a cost of Rs.900 crore. Soon the scheme will be completed. I assure you that the Government will take steps to make Coimbatore a congestion-free city after the completion of all bridge works. After the completion of West by-pass road all vehicles coming to the City will take the by-pass road thereby reducing the traffic congestion completely. A detailed project report is being prepared for the construction of West by-pass road to divert all the heavy vehicles via the by-pass road to make Coimbatore congestion-free.

On this occasion I would like to point out that the Government is your Government and it is the only Government that meets the demands of people. Puratchi Thalaivi Amma announced many schemes for Coimbatore District and the present Government, which is treading the path laid down by Amma also announced many schemes for the District. All the schemes will be completed and soon the District will become a self-sufficient District.

The Hon'ble Minister for Municipal Administration & Rural Development, Special Programme Implementation Thiru. S.P. Velumani, Hon'ble Minister for Animal Husbandry Thiru. Udumalai K.Radhakrishnan, Hon'ble Deputy Speaker of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Thiru. Pollachi V. Jayaraman, MPs and MLAs, Additional Chief Secretary, Highways and Minor Ports Dept. Dr. Rajeev Ranjan I.A.S., Coimbatore District Collector Thiru. T.N.Hariharan I.A.S., and other high Government Officials participated in the function.

Chief Minister recalls the historic Andipatti connection

Slew of schemes for Theni District, dear to Puratchi Thalaivar and Amma

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** at the Bharat Ratna Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. M.G.R. Centenary function held at Theni on 09.11.2017 *(English Translation)*.

I bow to the Golden Star Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma who had come to this world as a reincarnation of Dharmam for protecting the interests of women, the vocation of farmers, the lives of poor people and the greatness of Tamils.

Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister Thiru. O.Panneerselvam, the son of the soil of Theni District who enjoyed the trust of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and who delivered an inspiring presidential address at this centenary function of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R., Hon'ble Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha Dr. M.Thambidurai who delivered a special address, Government Secretary Thiru. Venkatesan who welcomed the gathering, Rajya Sabha Member Thiru. R.Parthiban, Cumbum MLA Thiru.S.T.K.Jakkaiyan, Hon'ble Ministers, Hon'ble Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Thiru. Pollachi V. Jayaraman, Government Chief Whip Thiru. S.Rajendran, the Special Representative of Tamil Nadu Government at New Delhi Thiru. N.Thalavai

Sundaram, Chairperson of Tamil Nadu Text Book and Educational Services Corporation Tmt. B.Valarmathi, Chairman of the Tamil Nadu Housing Board Thiru.P.K. Vairamuthu, Theni District Collector Thiru. N.Venkatachalam, AIADMK Presidium Chairman, former Minister Thiru. Madhusudhanan, former Ministers Thiru. Munusamy, Thiru. Ponnaiyan, Thiru. Semmalai and Thiru. Natham Viswanathan, MPs, MLAs, Party Headquarters Executives, former Ministers, former MPs and MLas, Representatives of Co-operative institutions, former representatives of Local Bodies, party cadre who are the aerial roots of the party, Government staff, Respected Elders, Ladies, Youths, Beneficiaries of Welfare Assistance, media friends –in the first place I pay my respects to all of you.

I think it will be proper here to mention some of the great things about Theni District. It is a District of greenery with Nature's bounty like mountains, forests, rivers, odais, water falls, dams, tanks, gardens and agricultural fields; it was ruled by Chera, Chola, Pandiya dynasties, Arcot Nawabs, Nayak kings; the last battle of the Delhi Sultan Malik Kafur was his victory over the Cumbum area.

Kannagi, wife of Kovalan who was executed by the Pandiya king on the charge of theft, reached the Vinnothi Paarai and calms down after burning the un-righteous Pandiya king and the Madurai City. The epic Silapathikaram says that Kovalan, then descends from the skies, ties the 'mangalyam' to Kannagi who was in a state of widowhood and takes her to the heavens in a 'pushpaka vimanam'. The place where this incident took place, it is said, is called 'Mangala Devi'. The Vinnotthi Paarai that calmed down Kannagi as mentioned in Silapathikaram, is in Theni. That is why Theni District remains a place of peace till date.

I feel the sweet name Theni has come to adorn this place as the massive congregation of people at the shandy held at Mukkoottu road where the Nehru statue is situated now, resembles, seen from a height, a beehive with a swarm of bees.

After the Cauvery delta, the 6,100 hectares stretch of paddy grown area from Gudalur to Veerapandi is the second place in Tamil Nadu to raise two crops; Mullai Periyar is the source of irrigation for this area. This makes Theni District an agriculture District, providing livelihood to farmers.

John Pennycuick was living proof of Kaniyan Poongundranar's dictum, 'Yaadhum oore yaavarum kelir' (the entire world is mine; all are my kin). People of this area adore him as God for constructing the Mullai Periyar dam out of his own funds and amidst several hurdles. Considerations of Country, religion, language or race never weighed with Col. John Pennycuick in completing the task he undertook. On 15.01.2013, his birth anniversary, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma declared open a manimandapam with his statue at the Mullai Periyar river bank.

Theni District has several tourist spots like Mullai Periyar dam, Vaigai Dam park, called 'mini Brindavanam', Sothu Paarai Dam, Kumbakarai Falls, Surili Falls, Thekkadi, Megamalai, Kozhukku Malai and Agamalai.

Theni District is not merely a place where Nature displays her charm; it is a spiritual land, full of divinity. It is a District of holy places with great antiquity for all religions like Sri Gowmariamman temple, Periyakulam Balasubramania temple, Mavootru Sri Velappar temple, Devadhanapatti Moongilanai Sri Kamakshi Amman temple, Kuchanoor swayambu Saneeswasrar temple, Nawab Masjid (Pallivaasal), Cumbum Vavar Masjid and Rayappanpatti church.

Thiru. P.T.Rajan, a native of Theni District and President of the Justice Party was Chief Minister of the then Madras Presidency.

Then Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. and Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had been elected to the Assembly from this District and became Chief Ministers of Tamil Nadu. The present Deputy Chief Minister and the son of the soil of this Theni District, Brother O.Panneerselvam was Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. So, I am proud to say that Theni District has sent four Chief Ministers.

Artists like Isai Gnani Ilayaraja, Kavignar Na. Kamarasan, Lakshiya Nadigar S.S.Rajendran, comedian Surulirajan, actor Major Sundararajan, Director Bharathiraja and many other reigning famous personalities in the fields of arts and literature have hailed from this District.

This beautiful Theni District captured an important place in the arts and political life of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. contested from the Andipatti Constituency in the 1984 Assembly Elections when he was getting treated in the US for his illness. In the political history of Tamil Nadu, why, for that matter, in that of India also, our Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. was the only person who got elected to the Assembly and later as Chief Minister even while remaining in a foreign Country and not participating in the election campaign.

People of Andipatti Constituency are mainly responsible for Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar stepping on Tamil soil as the Chief Minister for a third time when he returned to India from the US. The credit and historic privilege for this belongs to the people of Theni District.

While there are so many Constituencies in Tamil Nadu, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. chose Andipatti as his Constituency as he came to know of the affection of the people of this Constituency towards him during the shooting of 'Maattukara Velan'. The film shooting was done at the Vaigai Anaicut. It is said people in the surrounding Villages, particularly women, used to come to the shooting site with packaged food, wait, see the loving face of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. and go into raptures.

They made him win the election by polling 67.40 per cent votes for his cultured behaviour, qualities, charitable disposition and for his lovable face. This is a historic achievement.

Just as women had affection and attachment towards Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R., the latter too reciprocated these feelings in the same measure. Many instances can be cited for this. I wish to share one or two of them.

Among the crores of party volunteers of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R., there was a Muslim youth who had resigned his teacher's post and worked as a full time servant of M.G.R. Mandram out of his extreme love for the leader, and served the people. His mother did not regret her son's decision. While she was in her death bed afflicted with poverty, she had a last wish – to see Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. in person before her death. Her relatives scoffed at her desire in the bed-ridden condition. The mother beseeched her son to fulfill her wish. The youth conveyed his mother's desire to many persons who were in touch with Hon'ble M.G.R. but nothing worked. As a last resort, the youth wrote a letter to Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. directly and the leader came to know of the last wish of that mother. He shed tears at that mother's affection towards him. "I will respond whoever calls me" – said Krishna in the Geetha; Jesus said: "Knock the door, it will be opened; ask, it will be given". Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. felt that that mother had called him and he decided to go and meet her.

After attending a marriage function at Tindivanam, he rushed to Pondicherry secretly to visit that mother. In a street where Muslims resided, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R.'s car pulled up in front of a thatched hut. The volunteer, her son, was not there. The doors were wide open. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. entered the house and woke up that mother gently. A pleasant shock gripped that mother when she opened her eyes and she could not believe her own eyes. She intently looked at Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. and gripped his hands. With all kindness, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. called her "Amma" and she tried to sit up. Preventing her from doing so, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. enquired about her health, put in her hands gently a cash bundle and as he was leaving, the elderly lady said, shedding tears copiously, "I don't need these eyes hereafter; I have seen you; let my life go". That mother's voice on that day has been resonating as the united voice of women for generations and rings even today. Political leaders may emerge in thousands; but

a people's leader appears only rarely. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. is one such 'Makkal Thilagam'.

A pre-requisite for a Country's progress is the happiness and contentment of women. If women have peace of mind, every family will be well off; if every family is well off, the town will be well off; and if every town is well off, the Country will be well off. As Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. understood this deeply, he took greater interest in welfare schemes for women.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. had great affection and devotion for his mother. That was why he took great interest in the welfare of women. The schemes he designed for women put a permanent end to the age-old sufferings and difficulties of women. Through many schemes like marriage assistance to the daughters of destitute widows and working women hostels for the safety of working women, he found a place in the hearts of poor women. His interest in the poor is revealed in the golden lines of the song - 'Theruvengum palligal kattuvom; kalvi theriyaadha paergale illaamal seivom; karuthaaga pala thozhil payiluvom, ooril kanjikkillai enra sollinai pokkuvom' ('We will construct schools in every street; we will wipe out illiteracy; we will learn intently many trades; and remove the word – no food'). Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. brought in a series of welfare schemes for children and women to remove the distress of women over their inability to educate their children.

In accordance with the song, "Porul konda paergal - manam kondathillai; tharum kaigal thaedi porul vandhathillai. Manam endra kovil tirakkindra naeram, azhaikkamal angae dheivam vandhu saerum" ('The wealthy don't have the heart; money doesn't flow into the hands that give; when the heart opens up, God comes there on His own'), a charitable mind and possession of wealth, generally, don't go together. If the two co-existed in one, it was in Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar considered the problems of people as his own and solved them. Did the earlier DMK rulers bring in any scheme to end the basic issues of people? Can they list the schemes they had brought in for the welfare of Tamil Nadu by persuading the Central Government? You should ponder over this without any sense of bias. They used their powers and office only to enrich the members of their families and never used them to benefit the poor and the people at any time.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, once asked: "Have we seen in any Country the deplorable state of a single family acting as a power centre with positions for each member as Chief Minister, Central Minister, State Minister and as chieftains in Districts?" They acquainted the world with scientific and subtle corruption and implemented it. Today, they want to cheat the people by coming to the streets under different disguises like agitation against corruption, march against corruption and hunger strike against corruption. But "whatever disguise you may put on, people will see your real face through their x-ray eyes''.

Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. had sung: "Nalla theerppai ulagam sollum naal varumbodhu/ Andru sirippavar yaar? Azhubavar yaar?/ Theriyum appodhu" ('When the time comes for the world to give a good verdict, it will then be known who will laugh and who will weep').

"Tamils will forget the bad things immediately; they will remember the good things throughout the life. But if you want to kindle their memories, they will remember only your corruptions. It will rebound on you. You should understand that you can never capture the hearts of people in future and form a Government, whatever be the extent of your lies. We have done only good things to this people. They have us in their hearts. For several more centuries, this Movement will work for the people. We will never face defeat because our great leaders have brought us up like that. Our response to you is Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R.'s song itself: 'Annan andru nalla nalla karuthu, azhagu tamizhil solli solli koduthu, valartha pillaiyada! Adhanaal tholvi illaiyada' ('Our elder brother has brought us up imbibing good ideas in charming Tamil language and hence no defeat for us')"

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma contested the 2002 Assembly Election from Andipatti and became the Chief Minister. At a Government function held at Theni on 15.04.2002, she said by way of thanking the electorate: "Andipatti made me a member of the Legislative Assembly. Tamil Nadu made me Chief Minister. Andipatti proposed me to be the Chief Minister and Tamil Nadu seconded it".

In all their election meetings, DMK partymen brag that they are one up on us. Their culture is to forget easily the promises they made if they win or to blame the ruling party if they lose. But AIADMK is a great Movement which identifies the needs of the people and is intent on executing them speedily. We are truthful in whatever we say; this makes us popular amidst people; and they give their votes to us.

They are now engaged in a false campaign that money is wasted in the name of organizing centenary function for Bharata Ratna Dr. M.G.R. That it is a false propaganda, let loose out of political malice born out of their inability to accept that huge gatherings assemble in every District at the centenary function, is known to those who have come here, to the beneficiaries of welfare assistance and people of Tamil Nadu who benefit from the many schemes implemented by the Tamil Nadu Government with expenditures running to crores of rupees.

At the Theni meeting on 15.04.2002, the entire cabinet was on the dais along with Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. By way of reminding that instance, I am proud to inaugurate and announce welfare schemes for people from this dais today in the presence of the Ministers of Tamil Nadu.

Today, I have inaugurated 25 works valued at Rs.19.70 crore inclusive of works worth Rs.9.08 crore of the Tamil Nadu Warehousing Corporation; laid foundation for 35 works to be executed at a cost of Rs.65.80 crore inclusive of construction of retaining wall and restoration of channel to be implemented by the Public Works Department at a cost of Rs.27 crore; and I will be presenting Rs.99.47 crore as welfare assistance of different Departments to 20,456 beneficiaries. From the time of this Government assuming responsibility till date, I have inaugurated 35,108 works worth Rs.11,016.17 crore and laid foundation for 6,813 works worthy Rs.3,991.72 crore. Totally, 41,921 works worth Rs.15,007.89 crore are under implementation. Besides these, I wish to mention a few schemes that Amma's Government has implemented exclusively for Theni District in the last six years.

Loan arrears to co-operative banks by small and micro farmers to the tune of Rs.85.46 crore have been waived – this has benefited 12,484 farmers; laptops worth Rs.70.33 crore have been distributed to 61,364 students free of cost; bicycles have been distributed to students at no cost; under the marriage assistance scheme for educated poor women, Rs.53.55 crore and 62.06 kg gold have been distributed to 15,532 women; many beneficiaries have been treated under the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Medical Insurance scheme to the tune of Rs.36.54 crore; 2,789 green houses with solar power panels have been constructed at a cost of Rs.71.38 crore under the Chief Minister's scheme for this; under the THAI scheme, 2,615 works have been taken up for execution at a cost of Rs.36.88 crore and 2,437 of them have been completed; bank loans to an extent of Rs. 571 crore have been directly issued to 17,333 women self help groups; through the Department of Higher Education, 2 Polytechnic Colleges, 1 College of Nursing, 1 Government Arts and Science College and 1 Engineering College, have been opened; on behalf of the Tamil Nadu Electricity Generation and Distribution Corporation, 8 new power schemes have been executed at a cost of Rs.48.70 crore and new upgradation works have been undertaken at a cost of Rs.35.40 crore; the Highways (Construction and Maintenance) Department has upgraded 837.41 km long roads at a cost of Rs.342.19 crore and 96 culvert works have been implemented at a cost of Rs.78.62 crore; Rs.15.19 crore has been distributed as input relief assistance to farmers whose yields have been affected and 18,159 farmers have benefited from this; under the 'kudimaramathu' scheme 13 works are to be executed at a cost of Rs.83 lakh and 14 more works are to be taken up at a cost of Rs.1.92 crore; and under the scheme of free distribution of de-silted sand to farmers at no cost, 9,30,196 cubic metres of sand , collected from 173 tanks and 'kanmais' have been distributed, benefiting 13,941 farmers.

The Opposition parties will not appreciate these schemes. As far as we are concerned, it is enough if people appreciate them.

But you (the Opposition) have made it a habit of yours to blame these schemes. It has become the policy of your party to find fault with anything and everything. You cannot change and people know this.

Two parrot siblings were brought up in two different environments. One is in the company of goons and another amidst wise men. The first one always utters the words 'kill' and 'punch'. The second one invites others with the words 'come' and 'take your seat'. The reason is they repeat what they hear every day. Like this, our partymen are trained by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar and Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma to speak good things and do good things. When I say this, I am reminded of a story.

A boy in a town was sitting on a branch of a tree and was cutting the base of that branch. He didn't realize that he would fall down. In a few minutes, the branch of the tree was about to fall. If the boy fell down from that height, it would be fatal.

Seeing this from the Heavens, Goddess Parvathi tells Lord Siva : "O Lord! The boy is cutting down the branch hastily without even knowing that he would be in danger. In a few minutes, the branch is going to be torn off the tree. Rescue him from the danger".

Lord Siva replied: “Let him fall down; be patient”.

“What can be done after he falls down from that height; when we are the father and mother of all living beings, is it not our duty to save the boy from the danger”, asks Parvathi Devi.

Lord Siva replies: “Parvathi Devi! There will be no danger for him. As he falls down, if he cries “Amma”, you catch hold of him from here; if he cries “Appa” (father), I will catch hold of him and protect him”. At that very second, the branch broke down and the boy was falling. At that time, he neither called out “Amma” nor “Appa” but cried out “Aiyyo”. Both Lord Siva and Parvathi Devi did not try to save him. The boy fell down.

“See, Parvathi; he was not trained to speak good things; that is why he uttered “Aiyyo” and invited danger on himself”, said Lord Siva.

So, even as those who have not been trained to speak good things meet with a steep fall, the Opposition parties have fallen down from the hearts of the people. This is a fact.

The Leader of the Oppostion M.K.Stalin, under the pretext of visiting flood-affected areas in Chennai goes to a few places and speaks to the media thereafter. “Rain water is stagnating in low-lying areas; do we need a Government that cannot drain out this water”, he asks, and he criticizes the Government as ineffective. We ask: “He was Mayor of Chennai for five years; for another five years, he was the Local Administration Minister and Deputy Chief Minister. In these 10 years, he did not do anything for Chennai City. He held both these posts and they deal with local administration and he was in charge of them. Why did not he think about Chennai City at those times? Has wisdom dawned on him only now? Today, Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma’s Government is acting speedily. The stagnant water was removed then and there by the Municipal Corporation workers. But when he was Mayor, it is stated, that he used to visit the Chennai Corporation office only once a week. He did not go round Chennai City. Now, he goes to Kolathur area every day. This water stagnation problem would not have arisen now, had he gone round Chennai Corporation areas then. When people entrusted him with a post, he did not discharge his duties correctly. For that very reason, people forgot him. Today, he is in the Opposition and has become its leader also.

But, when Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma was alive, she announced an allotment of Rs.4,034 crore under Rule 110 of the Assembly rules and first phase works at a cost of Rs.1,101 crore were started for providing drainage facilities to prevent water stagnation in low-lying areas during rainy season and safeguard the people of Chennai City. Work on construction of storm water drainage for nearly 386 kms was started and now it has been completed to a length of 300 kms. The remaining work will be completed shortly.

The entire scheme is to be implemented in three stages. Work on the first stage has already been started. For the second stage, preparation of a detailed report for the project, costing Rs.1,800 crore with Japan International Co-operation Agency (JICA) financial assistance, is under way. It will be completed soon. The work of draining water from the sub-basin areas into Kosasthalai river will be started

after getting Central Government's permission and the scheme will be implemented.

Likewise, Amma's Government is working on preventing flood damages in the Cooum and Adyar river basins by acquiring World Bank financial assistance. Amma's Government continues to be in the service of the people.

I also wish to point out that Amma's Government is trying to get foreign assistance under the KSW scheme for providing drainage facilities so that water stagnation in low-lying areas is eliminated totally whenever it rains and floods the Chennai City.

They did not do anything during their rule. Only in Amma's rule, schemes are framed and implemented. They have made it a habit to blame the Government whether it be drought or floods.

Not only this. The DMK was in power for nearly 14 years. It shared power at the Centre also, both in the Congress-led Government and in the BJP Government. People should ponder what good they did to Tamil Nadu with this power. They had not brought forward any scheme.

Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma got the sanction for raising the level of Mullai Periyar dam from 136 feet to 142 feet by waging court battles, protected the fundamental rights of the people and brought succour to them. DMK leaders could have done it easily when they were wielding power at the Centre. They never thought of it.

Did they set up the Cauvery Water Management Board? On that too, they defaulted. So, I am duty-bound to say that they were at the Central Government for their own pleasure, to enjoy power and earn money. At the same time, I wish to point out that the two great leaders of AIADMK implemented the schemes that people needed.

Another complaint is that the AIADMK has not conducted the local body elections. Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma declared that this election would be held. It was they who went to the Court and got a stay. It was not we who prevented the holding of the election. DMK did it. I wish to state that once the Court verdict is delivered, local body elections will be held. So whoever it be who blames the Government, I wish to state that the schemes of two great leaders still have full force and that Amma's Government is implementing countless schemes for the people.

Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister and I will function as a double-barrelled gun in Government and in the party. You imagined many things. You thought this Movement will collapse after the demise of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. God gave Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma as a gift to this Movement and she protected the party and re-established Ponmana Chemmal M.G.R.'s rule. Though God has taken back Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, she had stated in the Legislative Assembly in a manner of setting up a target that this rule would remain for hundred more years after her. As if to carry that out, as the Deputy Chief Minister had stated earlier, not a single party man has left the Movement. No one is able to even touch them.

As loyalty runs in the blood of partymen, you cannot entice them to leave the party. So, I wish to state very categorically that this movement

cannot be shaken as long as there are loyal volunteers and people.

We are implementing many schemes like Kudimaramathu scheme. Theni District is an agricultural District. By de-silting the lakes and tanks, the water bodies get deepened and the excavated sand is used by farmers as natural manure in their fields. During the monsoon rains, more water gets stored in the deepened water bodies which in turn raises the ground water level meeting the irrigational and drinking water needs of people in those areas. We have designed a wonderful scheme. In the first phase, we have de-silted 519 lakes by allotting Rs. 100 crore. Then, Rs.300 crore more was allotted for the scheme, but it has been suspended due to the onset of the monsoon. The leader of the Opposition asks where has the Rs.400 crore gone. We have spent only Rs.100 crore. I wish to tell you that works on the balance of Rs.300 crore have not been started. He is speaking without any knowledge of this.

His only plan is to topple this Government by luring one of us. They always file cases. Not a day passes without a case getting heard in the courts. With the support of the Goddess Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, we will smash the cases and win. We will get justice on the strength of the fairness of our case. When justice is rendered, as the Deputy Chief Minister mentioned here, we will get the 'two leaves' symbol. With this symbol, we will continue to realize the dreams of our two great leaders.

I wish to declare a happy message that 11 check dams will be constructed in this District to save every drop of the rain water during the monsoon season.

Only in Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's regime, we are implementing so many schemes. Hence, we consider the centenary function for Ponmana Chemmal M.G.R. as a thanks giving function to Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. With affectionate wishes for your safe return to your places after this function and thanking Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister for his staunch support for the conduct of this function in such an excellent manner as also his team - party executives, MPs, Thiru. Jakkaiyan MLA, who helped him, the District Collector, Government staff and all the good hearts, I take leave stating,

Yesterday was ours! Today is ours! and Tomorrow also will be ours!

Vaazhga Anna Namam. Valarga Puratchi Thalaivar Pugazh; Thodarga Hon'ble Amma's rule.

Nandri; Vanakkam.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THENI DISTRICT:

Construction of 11 check dams –

1. Two check dams will be constructed across Valayaru, Bhoopathy Village, Bodinayakanur Taluk near Mamarathu Vayal and Nattamaitoppu;

2. One across Pillayar Oothu Odai in Thevaram Village, Uttamapalayam Taluk;

3. One across Vaigai river near Kadamalaigundu Village in Andipatti Taluk;

4. One across Vaigai river near Vallal Nadhi in Andipatti Taluk;

5. One across Nagalaar Odai near S.S.Puram Village, Andipatti Taluk;

6. One across Kottakudi river in Anaikaraipatti Village near Madurai Veeran Kovil, Bodinayakanur Taluk;

7. One across Kottakudi river near Survey No. 683/2 in Bodi Village, Bodinayakanur Taluk;

8. One across Chinnaaru near survey no.1218 in Bodi Village, Bodinayakanur Taluk;

9. One across Suddha Gangai Odai near Manickapuram, Bodinayakanur Taluk;

10. One across Manjalaaru near Vinayakar Kovil, Genguvarpatti Village, Periyakulam Taluk.

Modernisation of Canal:

The Pudu Anaicut canal in Genguvarpatti Village, Periakulam Taluk will be de-silted, sluice gates renovated and converted into concrete-lined canal for free flow of Manjalaru water into Mathuwarkulam Kanmai. Through this scheme, irrigation will be stabilized in 474 acres of land.

Deepening of Kanmai - The Meerusamudram kanmai in Allinagaram will be deepened and storage increased so as to meet the drinking water needs of Theni Taluk.

Strengthening of roads - In National Highway 49, the road from Km 50/6 to 58/0 – that from Andipatti Kanmai to T. Subbulapuram, will be strengthened; the roads from Km.74/0 to 76/450 and from 77/6 -80/0 in National Highway 49 -that is from the District Collector office, Theni City to Bodivilakku will be strengthened.

Construction of flyovers and culverts – In Vaaikalpaarai-Moolakadai road that goes via., the Andipatti-Mayiladum Paarai-Thangammalpuram Salai, two flyovers will be constructed at Km 7/2 and at Km. 1/10; on the Thimminayakanpatti road that goes via Bodi-Thevaram-Lakshmi Nayakanpatti, two culverts will be constructed at Km 4/6 (i) and at 4/6 (ii).

Upgradation of medical facilities – Ultra-modern equipment will be supplied and facilities such as dialysis, endoscopy, a special psychiatric ward as also infrastructure will be provided at the Periyakulam District Government Headquarters Hospital, Theni District with JICA's financial assistance; the storage facility for medicines in Theni District will be expanded; mammogram and a geriatric ward will be set up in the Theni Government Medical College Hospital; tablets will be provided to 162 Village nurses working in Theni District for recording medical data; modern laboratory equipment inclusive of dialysis will be supplied to Cumbum Government Hospital; a modern eye-testing and treatment centre will be provided to Veerapandi Government Hospital; the Village nurse training school at Veerapandi will be upgraded; and comprehensive primary welfare services will be provided in Mayiladumparai and Kadamalaikundru circles.

‘Advancing in many spheres, Government will tread unitedly in path of M.G.R. and Amma’

Speech of the Hon’ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** at the centenary function of Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. M.G.R. held at Tirunelveli on 12.11.2017 *(English Translation)*.

I bow to Ponmana Selvi Idaya Deivam Hon’ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma who presents Herself in all the directions as the Merciful Goddess Mother, the Great Power beyond the grasp of humans, the Crown of the Motherland, the Pinnacle of Courage and the Great Light of Intelligence.

Hon’ble Deputy Chief Minister Thiru. O.Panneerselvam who delivered the presidential address in the centenary function of Hon’ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R., Hon’ble Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha Dr. M.Thambidurai who delivered a special address, Hon’ble Minister for Adi Dravidar and Scheduled Tribes Welfare Tmt. V.M.Rajalakshmi, Secretary to the Department of Tamil Development and Information Thiru. R.Venkatesan who welcomed the gathering, Members of Parliament Thiru. S.Muthukaruppan, Thiru. K.R.P. Prabakaran, Tenkasai MP Tmt. Vasanthi Murugesan, Ambasamudram MLA Thiru. R.Murugaiah Pandian, Tenkasi MLA

Thiru. S.Selvamohandas Pandian, Radhapuram MLA Thiru. I.S.Inbadurai, Vasudevanallur MLA Thiru. A.Manoharan, Nanguneri MLA Thiru. H.Vasanthakumar (Indian National Congress), Hon'ble Ministers, Hon'ble Deputy Speaker of Assembly Thiru. Pollachi V. Jayaraman, Government Chief Whip Thiru.S.Rajendran, Tamil Nadu Government's Special Representative at New Delhi Thiru. N.Thalavai Sundaram, Chairperson of Tamil Nadu Textbook and Educational Services Corporation Tmt. B.Valarmathi, Chairman of the Tamil Nadu Housing Board Thiru.P.K.Vairamuthu, Tirunelveli District Collector Thiru. Sandeep Nandhuri who is to propose a vote of thanks, MPs, MLAs, former Ministers, Executives of Party Headquarters, former MPs, MLAs, representatives of Co-operative Institutions, former representatives of Local Bodies, Party Cadres who are the aerial roots of the party, Government staff, respected Elders, Ladies, Youth, welfare assistance beneficiaries, media friends – at the outset I pay my respects to all of you.

This Tirunelveli Seemai, the most ancient part of the Pandya Kingdom, going under the name 'Then Pandi Nagar,' is a District of Intellectuals; one exuding the fragrance of Tamil and spirituality and full of Nature's scenic beauty.

It is said the town was named Thiru – Nel - Veli as Lord Siva protected his devotee's paddy grain from getting drenched in rain water by erecting a fence (Veli). This is a sacred terrain that grows paddy on the banks of Porunai Nadhi and literature for Tamil language on the slopes of Podhigai hills. The hoariness of Tirunelveli is known by the Sangam literary works 'Irayanar Agapporul', 'Tiruvilaiyaadal Puranam', 'Madurai Kanchi', 'Kutrala Kuravanji' and the like, the research work of the British Priest Robert Caldwell 'Tirunelveli Seemai Varalaru' (History of Tirunelveli) and the Roman coins excavated in that District.

Of the five Sabhas where Lord Nataraja dances, two are in Tirunelveli - the 'Thaamira Sabhai' ('Copper Stage') at the Nellaiappar temple, one of the biggest in India and the 'Chithira Sabhai' ('Picturesque Stage') in Thiru Kutralam. Besides, it has many spiritual centres like Sankaranarayanar temple, Thenkasi

Kasi Viswanathar temple, Kurukkuthurai Murugan temple, Papanasam Agathiyar temple, Thiruppudaimarudur temple, Kappal Maadha Church and Aathangarai Mosque. The musical pillars of Nellaiappar temple and the sculptures of Krishnapuram temple are the standing examples for intricacy in the sculpting art. The two-tier bridge in Tirunelveli is the first one to be constructed in India.

Podhigai hill is the cradle for the ancient Tamil and for the wafting southern breeze. Many Tamil scholars like the Tamil Saint Agathiyar, the commentators of Tholkaappiyam Senaavarayar, Mangudi Marudhanar, Thirikooda Rasappa Kavirayar, the ancient Tamil poet Nappasalaiyar, the commentator of Tirukkural, Parimelazhagar, Tamil scholar Dr. R.P.Sethu Pillai, the first to get the M.L. Degree, Tamil scholar Ka.Subramania Pillai, 'Mozhi Gnayiru' Devaneya Pavanar, Rasikamani T.K.C., the author of the invocation song for Mother Tamil Manonmaniam Sundaranar, Dravida Maha Munivar Madhava Sivagnana Munivar, the translator of Tirukkural in English G.U.Pope and Rhenius 'Iyer' fostered Tamil from this soil.

Freedom fighters Pooli Thevan, Ondi Veeran, Veera Vanchinathan were all born in this heroic soil. Sangam poets divided the entire landscape into five types and Tirunelveli District has all of them in itself.

The birth of Swami Sivananda in Pathamadai, famous for its mat-weaving, the verbal encounter between Kattabomman and Jackson Durai, the penitentiary where freedom fighters were incarcerated, old Palayamkottai that abounds in educational institutions, Nellai M.D.T. Hindu Higher Secondary School where the nationalist poet Bharathiar studied, Kadayam where Bharathiar lived for a long time, the sweet Nellai Tamil and Halva that never satiates one, Vagaikulam, manufacturing centre of lamps, embossed with the figures of gods, add further glory to Tirunelveli District.

This Tirunelveli District is dear both to the centenary hero Bharata Ratna Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. M.G.R. and the Light of Tamil Nadu Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. Tirunelveli District is connected with the lives of these two great leaders of All India Anna DMK, whether it be with regard to politics or the arts. Many examples can be cited for this.

People of this District supported Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. greatly ever since he started the AIADMK. They proved in many Assembly Elections that whoever Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. fielded as party candidate for the Legislative Assembly, would win. No one can deny that through their votes, they showed their affection to Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R., cutting across caste and religious differences. Thiru. G.R.Edmund, Thiru. Navalar Nedunchezhian, Thiru. Nanjil Manoharan and Thiru. Y.S.M. Yusuf can be cited as examples for this. Though they belonged to other Districts, they contested elections from Nellai District and won due to Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R.'s popularity. These victories surprised many. But you, the people of Nellai Seemai and the confidence Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. reposed in you, are responsible for these victories. As you are adept in supporting good people, this Tirunelveli District became the eastern horizon for the dawn of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's political life.

In 1968, in this very same Tirunelveli Palayamkottai, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma gave a great dance performance under the presidency of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R., It looked as though the whole city had turned up for the performance. In his congratulatory speech at the end of the event, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R., mentioned Hon'ble Amma's name and said that Amma was a wonderful dance artiste and a good singer and this was proved by the film 'Adimai Penn'; not only in acting and in dance but she knew everything about every field. Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. also lauded her saying she would shine as an incomparable leader to the wonder of the entire Country if she took up social service and started working for the Country and the people. This appreciation was the first motivation that propelled Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma to public life. The whole world knows how

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R.'s words came true.

Only the discerning eyes of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. could see a rising great leader in Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma when this event took place in Palayamkottai; as if to confirm this, he had sung in the film 'Raman Thaediya Seethai' : "Thiruvalar Selviyo Naan Thaediya Thalaiviyo" ('Lady or the Leader I have been searching'). People then, would have enjoyed the song and the film as only cinematic; but, on hind sight, it seems Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. had given it as an information to the Tamil populace. Only later we could understand that the song contained Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R.'s vision and the future of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

Once in 1972, after the Palayamkottai event, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma did not turn up at the appointed time for the film shooting 'Annamittakai' held at Karnataka. All were concerned as Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi was known to be strict in keeping punctuality. Many came to know about the delay, including Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R., only later. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, while on way to the film shooting, saw an accident and rushed an old woman and her grandson, involved in that accident, to a hospital, admitted them and then came to the shooting spot. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. greatly appreciated Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma for helping an unknown woman and said: " I am stunned at the courage, intelligence, sensitivity and humanitarianism of Kalai Chelvi. She will serve the Country and the people in a good way in the future". Like Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R.'s film song – "Nadhiyai Pola Naamum Nadanthu Payan Tharavendum; Kadalai Pola Virindha Edhayam Irundhida Vendum; Vaanam Pola Pirarukkaaha Azhudhida Vendum; Vaazhum Vaazhkkai Ulagil Endrum Vilangida Vendum" ('We should be useful like the river, we should have a large heart like the sea; we should weep for others like the sky; we should leave an imprint through our life') – Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma was compassionate.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R.'s motto was that a cinema/film song should not merely

entertain but should go a step further and create awareness among the people. Hon'ble Perarignar Anna said: "Fans, while leaving the theatre after seeing a film, should have learnt a new lesson(from it)". Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R., only followed that. This brought about a mingling of hearts between the people and Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. It was Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. who narrowed down the distance between an actor and the general public. In politics too, he followed the same pattern. This enabled Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. to become the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu and discharge his duty by the people in an excellent way.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R., once, movingly spoke: "If I had wished, I could have amassed money in crores. I did not; but I am collecting crores and crores of well-wishers ('Kodikanakkaana idayangalai serthukondirukkiraen'). That, crores of people are blessing Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. even today, can be seen all over the world. While people have forgotten or repudiated many leaders and actors after a passage of time, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. is the only leader who still lives in the hearts of people and whose name is uttered by people, even 30 years after his demise. That is why we cherish him as 'Makkal Thilakam' (Crown of Humanity).

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. might have received any number of titles and awards but the best of them and the most dear to the common man is the title 'Vaadhiyar'. I am proud to say that it was Tirunelveli Municipality which conferred in 1960 this title 'Vaadhiyar' that was known most and uttered dearly by the lower strata of people, workers, farmers, youths and women. That was why a wonderful song was included in his 105th film "Nam Naadu" in the year 1969 in which Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma acted, which ran as follows: "Vaangaiyya Vadhiyaaraiya, Varaverkka Vandommaiya, Yezhaigal Ungalai

Nambi Edhirpaarthu Nindrommaiya/ Annanin Thambi, Unmayin Thozhan, Yezhaikku Thalaivan Neengalaiya/ Samayam Vandhadhu, Dharumam Vendrathu, Nalladhai Ninaichom-Nadandhadhaiya" ('Come Teacher, we have come to receive you; we, the poor were expecting you, reposing hope in you; you are Anna's younger brother, a friend of truth, leader of the poor; the time has come, righteousness has won, we thought of the good – and it has happened').

This song appears as though Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and the people invited Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. to take over the leadership of Tamil Nadu. As the invitation is extended to Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. with the title 'Vadhiyaar', which you have given, I wish to state, that honour should also go to your District.

So, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. extended an invitation to Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma to come to public life in 1968; in 1969 Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma extended the invitation, on behalf of people, to Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. to take over the governance of Tamil Nadu with the 'Vadhiyaar' title you have given. I am proud to state that in these two historic events, people of Tirunelveli had a role. That is why people like me feel it is a sacred act to come to this soil.

The AIADMK is even now journeying in the path laid by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. and Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. Without deviating even a little bit from their policies and taking their desires as the solemn pledge given to the people, we are discharging our various duties.

We have not considered ourselves as leaders at any time; as volunteers we are serving the people day and night. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. worked for the party till his end. He was pre-occupied with the growth of the party even while he was unwell and was under treatment in the United States. I still remember the remark he made to partymen after returning to India after the treatment. "I have returned from America gainfully; I have enrolled many persons there as members of the AIADMK" he said with pride. Partymen should realize that Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. strengthened the party and the Government by enrolling members to the party even in his last days.

We cannot say that we are in high spirits always. In such times, it is enough if we hear the songs of Puratchi Thalaivar Ponmana Chemmal M.G.R. The music and meaning of the song will rejuvenate us even without our being conscious of it. Only those who have experienced that will know it. We have a duty to redeem Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's pledge: "AIADMK will live for hundreds of years more". We have to work hard for that. Let us explain to the people in detail, the benefits that resulted from the schemes implemented by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. and Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. This Government that treads the path of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma will remain the confidants of Government staff in carrying to people the schemes it framed, from the day it assumed the task of governance.

This Government of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma is giving high priority to health, educational development, women, agriculture,

youth and industrial development. It acts on a war footing to safeguard people from natural disasters. As it had taken precautionary measures, it averted drinking water scarcity when an unprecedented drought hit the State. Now, there is continuous North-East monsoon rain and through its speedy measures the Government could protect the normal life of people from being derailed. All the Departments are put on high alert and several teams, under the leadership of Hon'ble Ministers, are visiting different parts of the State and attending to speedy execution of relief works. People know this. Fault-finders will always find fault. The DMK does it more, not sparing even the good works that have been carried out. Alas, they have to show their presence only through this act. Let us take as a command, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar's song - "Nenjam Undu, Nermai Undu Odu Raja; Neram Varum Kaathirunthu Paaru Raja" ('We have the Will and the Honesty; Keep on Raja –Wait and see Raja, till the Time comes') - and work.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. said: "Let us not fight over which party is big but compete on whose work is contributing for the Country's good". This is the lesson our two great leaders left for us. Let us follow that. After smashing the hurdles placed by the opposition parties, we are paying greater attention to framing schemes for the benefit of the Country and on implementing them speedily. Through the centenary celebration of Bharata Ratna Puratchi Thalaivar Hon'ble Dr. M.G.R., people have come to know how many great schemes have been inaugurated for the people and how many new schemes have been announced. This is our strength. As long as people are with us, no force can fell us. With this determination, I am proud to inaugurate welfare schemes worth several crore rupees, to lay foundation and to announce new schemes.

Today, I am inaugurating 192 works worth Rs.118 crore inclusive of the combined water supply scheme for 100 Villages around Koodankulam Atomic Station, completed at a cost of Rs.68.10 crore; I have laid the foundation for 142 works worth Rs.528.91 crore inclusive of the execution of the underground sewerage structure in the Tirunelveli Municipal Corporation area under the Amrut scheme costing Rs.289 crore; welfare assistance to the tune of Rs.87.74 crore is to be distributed on behalf of different Departments to 34,655 beneficiaries.

After this Government took over administration till date, I have inaugurated 35,157 works worth Rs.11,112.83 crore and laid foundation for 6,852 works worth Rs.4,084.32 crore. Totally 42,009 works worth Rs.15,196.15 crore are under implementation.

In the last six years, Amma's Government has executed many schemes in this District. I shall mention only a few of them, because the Opposition continues to question what schemes this Government has brought about.

Whenever we go to Districts, we list in detail the schemes that have been implemented in that particular District and the benefits that have accrued to people out of them. Similarly, I wish to give details of the schemes that have been given to Tirunelveli District and how people have benefited from them.

Pending co-operative bank loans of 19,696 Small and Micro farmers to the tune of Rs.160.95 crore have been waived; under the marriage assistance scheme for educated poor women, Rs.132.44 crore assistance and 485.80 kg gold have been given to 38,440 women; under the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Medical Insurance Scheme, 79,269 beneficiaries have been treated at a cost of Rs.149.49 crore; under the Uzhavar Paadukaappu Thittam, Rs.233.28 crore have been distributed, benefiting 72,713 farmers; under the free laptop scheme, 1,44,713 laptops have been distributed to students at a cost of Rs.220 crore; 1,79,865 bicycles worth Rs.114 crore have been distributed to students; bank loan to an extent of Rs.1,351.49 crore have been distributed to 48,932 Self Help Groups; Rs.32.04 crore has been allotted as input subsidy to farmers whose crop yield has been affected and 42,300 farmers have benefited; under the 'kudimaramathu' scheme, Rs.6.19 crore has been allotted and 103 works have been completed; under the scheme of free distribution of desilted sand to farmers, 16,93,566 cubic metre sand, desilted from 1,658 tanks have been distributed, benefiting 9,053 farmers, under the self-sufficiency scheme, 358 works, worth Rs.41.93 crore have been executed with people's participation; under the special road programme of the District rural development agency, 499 roads have been undertaken at a cost of Rs.188.66 crore; under the Prime Minister's Housing Scheme, 22,595 houses have been constructed at a cost of Rs.298.38 crore; 581 road works have been completed in all the 7 Municipalities in Tirunelveli District at a cost of Rs.103.25 crore; drinking water scheme for 390 dwelling units has been implemented at a cost of Rs.38.90 crore; for the Tamil Nadu Electricity Generation and Distribution Corporation, 8 sub-power stations have been set up at a cost of Rs.36 crore; extension works for 13 sub-stations with a capacity of 287 MW each, have been started at a cost of Rs.61 crore; new memorials have been set up by the Tamil Nadu Government for Veera Vanchinathan and Maaveeran Ondiveeran.

Besides, many building constructions have been taken up for the Department of Health at a cost of Rs.73.76 crore; under the 'House for All' scheme of the Slum Clearance Board, 10,154 houses are being constructed at a cost of Rs.304.62 crore; under the Tamil Nadu Road Development Scheme II, upgradation of Nanguneri-Bharathar Uvari Salai (SH – 89) – from KM O/O to 35/200 in the East Coast Road – is taking place at a cost of Rs.154.45 crore; upgradation of Rajapalayam - Sankarankovil Tirunelveli road from KM 1/800 to 28/000 and from KM 33/800 to 82/800 is taking place a cost of Rs.357.26 crore; and widening into four lane traffic and strengthening of Tirunelveli – Sengottai – Kollam road (SH-39)is taking place from KM 5/000 to 50/000 at a cost of Rs.480.60 crore.

Have the Opposition parties ever spoken of these constructive schemes? I am proud to state that Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's Government has implemented all these schemes for this District. These are schemes- to benefit the people. If you are really interested in people, stop the blame-game, come to the field and do work for the people. I am now reminded of a story.

There was a camel in a forest whose only work was to make fun of other animals. It ridiculed an elephant thus: "Your eyes are like the scribblings of urchins; do you have eyes that befit your large torso?". To a cow it said: "You have a rectangular face; over and above this you have ugly horns". Its sarcasm as regards the lion was: "O! Lion, do you have the charm of a King? Like a hermit, you have matted hair; along with this, you have a large mouth which holds such a roar!". The camel did not spare other animals also. Hence, all animals and birds started hiding themselves from the camel. On seeing this, the camel started roaming all over the forest with the conceit: "These cowardly animals have no answer to me and so they hide out of fear".

One day, a fox saw the camel. Before the camel started its derisive remarks, the fox gathered its wits and took the camel to a nearby water body and asked the camel to look at the figure in the water. After seeing the image, the camel said: "I have never seen such an ugly creature so far. Long face; legs like long bent sticks; a hunch back and ugly eyes; where did you find this animal?"

The fox replied: "The ugly animal you see in the water is yourself, your own figure. You are tall but you have no brains; hereafter, don't talk about other's back without knowing the beauty of your own". Realizing its mistake, the camel hung its head down.

Like this, many people always find fault with others to cover up their own faults. People know very well what they did when they ruled --- the public good they did and the ones they did for themselves with selfish reasons. They should reform, at least after hearing this camel story.

At the centenary function of Ponmana Chemmal Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. held at Theni, I said that I and the Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister would function like a double barrelled gun. The message we gave to the people was that we would function unitedly. What fault did he find in this remark? Through the media, we saw his remarks, given out in anger in an interview. You also know that. We could gauge the extent of his anger against us from his criticism. So, we should be cautious, because he is day-dreaming that he can split this Movement with the help of many others, and topple this Government. It will all end like a mirage. We will work together, whatever be the difficulties and sufferings. Let us take a pledge in this centenary function of Ponmana Chemmal Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. M.G.R.: 'Realizing the ideals of our two great leaders is our goal, goal, goal".

People know that it is the AIADMK Government, whether it be under Ponmana Chemmal Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. M.G.R. or under Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, which rushes to assist the affected people at the times of cyclone, flood or drought or any other disaster. This Movement was started for the people; to serve the people. This Government is not for a single family. This Government is to do good to the people. For this and for protecting the AIADMK party started by Ponmana Chemmal Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. M.G.R., we are journeying in the path laid by these two leaders.

Just as these two leaders framed schemes for the extremely marginalized people, Hon'ble Amma's Government also is in the forefront by working day and night to implement schemes for this section of people.

Law and order in Tamil Nadu is good; I am proud to say that no other State in India is as peaceful as Tamil Nadu. This is made possible due to the great support extended by the people to Hon'ble Amma's Government.

By way of benefiting farmers and fulfilling their long pending demand, Amma's Government started the wonderful 'kudimaramathu' scheme. In the first phase, Rs. 100 crore was allotted and 1,519 lakes were desilted. In the next phase Rs.300 crore is proposed to be allocated. Through this allocation, thousands of lakes will be desilted. Yet another aspect of this scheme, is that social activists and patriots participated in the implementation of this scheme and helped desilting of lakes and tanks at their own cost. Farmers and representatives of agriculturists excavated the sand from the bed of lakes and tanks free of cost and applied the sand as fertilizer in their fields. Hence, this a very big scheme; one that is basic to the livelihood of farmers. Through this scheme, I am proud to say that Amma's Government has facilitated the storage of 30 per cent of water during the monsoon rains. Water to the farmer is as important as life is to man. To recharge such precious water, Amma's Government will allot Rs.1,000 crore and work on construction of check dams will be started in three years. In the first phase Rs.350 crore has been allotted for the current year. Amma's Government has designed schemes and is implementing them by constructing check dams across Odais and rivers with the funds allotted to store the water of the monsoon rains and increase the ground water level.

Likewise, Amma's Government has revolutionized education. Tamil Nadu is the only State to have opened the maximum number of Colleges in the last six years compared to other States. Hon'ble Idaya Deivam Amma gave about 65 Government Arts and Science Colleges in her golden rule. Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had created conditions for poor students to prosecute their higher education in their own localities at low cost. Amma's Government too has opened 11 Government Arts and Science Colleges this year. I in the last six years, Amma's Government has given 76 Government Arts and Science Colleges and improved educational standards. In the nearly six year rule, laptops have been given to 31 lakh students, enabling even those in huts in hamlets to get science education. Amma's Government is the only Government which has achieved this feat. Enrolment in higher education has increased to 44.3 per cent and Tamil Nadu got the pride of place as the State that has the highest number of students in higher education.

In the health sector, Tamil Nadu is in the forefront. To provide medical treatment to rural people in their own localities, Amma's Government has opened upgraded primary health centres in every Panchayat Union.

I wish to underline that AIADMK is an iron fortress, built by one and a half crore volunteers. I wish to state that not a single brick can be removed from it. In other parties, only the leader can come to the highest post. But in

the AIADMK, even a volunteer can become the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. I am proud to say that the AIADMK has the cardinal principle that even an ordinary party man can occupy the highest post through hard work and loyalty.

Amma's Government is your Government; one that works for the poor and downtrodden and creates conditions to enable one to come out of any difficulty.

I thank the Minister from this District for organizing this centenary function of Ponmana Chemmal Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. M.G.R. as if it is a party conference and also the MPs, MLAs and party Executives who worked with him for the success of the function.

NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT MADE AT M.G.R. CENTENARY FUNCTION ON 12.11.2017

1. A new revenue circle with Thisaiyanvilai, Tirunelveli District, as Headquarters, will be created;

2.Under the 'House for All' scheme, 240 multi-storey apartments will be constructed for the poor at the Vagaikulam Scheme area, Ambasamudram Nagar, Tirunelveli District;

3. A new building will be constructed for the Government veterinary dispensary at Petthanadarpatti, Keezhpaavur Panchayat Union;

4. Bus facility will be provided from Keezhpaavur to Tirunelveli via Alangulam to enable women students of Rani Anna College to commute to the College;

5. Fund allocation will be made shortly for the second phase works of the Ramanadhi, Jambunadhi upper level canal scheme, announced by Hon'ble Amma; the first phase works are currently being executed;

6. Ramanadhi, Kadayam Panchayat Union, will be desilted to ensure irrigation for 4,943 agricultural fields;

7. A check dam will be constructed across Nambiyaru at Kanna Nallur area;

8. A bed dam will be constructed across Yelumichai Aaru at Kallidaikurichi Village, Ambasamudram Taluk, Tirunelveli District;

9. A check dam will be constructed across Chitraar at Agaram Village, Veerakeralampudur Taluk, Tirunelveli District;

10. A check dam will be constructed on the upper reaches of the confluence of Anuma Nadhi with Chitraar, at Surandai Village, Veerakeralampudur Taluk, Tirunelveli District;

11. A check dam will be constructed below Arunthava-Piraatti dam on Anuma Nadhi, Surandai Village, Veerakeralampudur Taluk, Tirunelveli District;

12. A bed dam will be constructed at the place where Achandhikulam branches off from Kottamalai Aaru, Chinthamani Village, Kadayanallur Taluk, Tirunelveli District;

13. A check dam will be constructed across Nichapa Nadhi, Panayur Village, Sankarankoil Taluk, Tirunelveli District;

14. Ultra-modern equipment, C-arm equipment will be supplied to the Tirunelveli Medical College Hospital; modern equipment

for the Mother-Child Care unit; and a ward will be set up for treatment of heart attack;

15. Ultra-modern equipment will be provided and infrastructure facilities will be created at the Kandigai - Beri Hospital;

16. Heart Attack treatment wards will be set up in Ambasamudram, Kovilpatti and Sengottai hospitals for early detection of and first aid treatment to heart attacks;

17. A new godown will be set up in Tirunelveli District for medicines;

18. Hand-set Tablets to record medical data will be supplied to the 379 rural health assistants working in Tirunelveli District;

19. Comprehensive primary welfare services will be provided in the Taluks of Mela-Neelitha-Nallur and Radhapuram;

20. Infrastructure facilities will be created in the Primary Health Centres at Chokkampatti and Vasudevanallur;

21. For the Tenkasi District Government Headquarters Hospital, ultra-modern equipment inclusive of two dialysis and endoscope will be supplied; trauma and supportive treatment centre for cancer patients and fertility centres with infrastructure facilities will be created; a heart-attack treatment ward will be set up for detection of heart attack at the initial stage itself and provide first aid treatment.

22. Equipment inclusive of C.T. Scan and Dialysis will be supplied to the Sankarankovil Government Hospital and vaccine storage facility will be provided; to detect heart attack in the early stages and provide first aid, a heart attack treatment will be set up;

23.At the Reddiyarpatti Government Hospital, a modern ophthalmic centre will be set up;

24. A dialysis equipment will be supplied to Kadayanallur Government Hospital;

25. A new Primary Health Centre will be set up at Petthanadarpatti Village in Keezhpaavur Panchayat Union;

26. A new Ancillary Health Centre will be set up in the Kamaraj Nagar area, Muthur Panchayat, Palayamkottai Panchayat Union;

27. A multi-purpose Community Hall will be constructed on behalf of the Rural Development Department at Thisayanvilai;

28. The Madurai-Kanniyakumari road will be widened and developed into a four lane traffic from Thazhaiyuthu to Dakkarammal Puram (Km 142/0 -146/2 and KM 156/0 – 160/0);

29. The Tirunelveli by-pass road will be widened and developed into a four lane traffic with median (inclusive of cross drainage works) from KM 0/0 – 3/510 and KM 3/920 – 7/6;

30. Edaikaal – Sernthamaram road will be widened and strengthened from KM 0/0 – 13/8;

31. Sankarankovil-Vasudevanallur road will be widened and strengthened from KM 0/0 – 18/120;

32. Radhapuram-Edayankudi road will be widened and developed from one way traffic to bed level causeway from KM 0/0 – 17/0'

33. Sambavar – Vadakarai road will be widened and strengthened from KM 0/0 – 8/6;

34. Tirunelveli – Sengottai – Kollam road will be widened and strengthened into a four lane traffic from KM 5/0 to 50/6.

35. To replace level crossing no.4 on Madurai – Kanniyakumari road KM 153/10, a railway over bridge will be constructed between Tirunelveli - Sei-Thunga-Nallur railway stations at railway KM 4/8 – 9;

36.To replace railway level crossing No.82 B on Nanguneri-Yerwadi-Valliyur-Vijayapathy road KM 14/6 – 9, a railway over bridge will be constructed between Nanguneri –Valliyur railway stations (railway KM 322/9 -323/0);

37. A railway over bridge will be constructed between North Panangudi and Aaralvaaimozhi railway stations (Rly.KM 310/0 – 310/100) to replace the railway level crossing no.74 B on the Kaaval Kinaru – Radhapuram road KM 0/6;

38.By-pass roads will be laid for Ambasamudram, Tenkasi and Sankarankovil;

39. A high level bridge will be constructed across Tamiraparani river, parallel to the old bridge on Tirunelveli –Madurai-Kanniyakumari Road KM 150/2;

40. A high flyover will be constructed on Karambai –Pottal road at 3/4 ;

41. A high level flyover will be constructed on Vasudevanallur – Poonaangulam road at KM1/2;

42. A flyover will be constructed on Senbagapuram –Meenakshipuram road at KM 1/6;

43. A flyover will be constructed on Kodhacheri road at KM 1/2;

44. A flyover will be constructed on Reddiyarpatti –Vijaya Narayanam road at KM 9/8;

45. A flyover will be constructed on Courtallam – Mathalam Paarai road at KM 0/10;

46. The first floor and compound wall will be constructed for Mano College at Govindaberi Village, Ambasamudram Taluk, Tirunelveli District;

47. Additional buildings will be constructed for the Rani Anna Government Women's College and for Surani Kamarasar Government Arts College, Tirunelveli District.

This is a centenary function for Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. Women and children who have come for the function should reach their homes safely. Party cadre and members of public while going back in vehicles or by foot should be careful.

I extend my heart-felt gratitude to the school management for lending the place to conduct the function. I congratulate all the good hearts who have made excellent arrangements for the function. I take leave of you, stating that this Government will continue to work for you as a servant.

Yesterday was Ours! Today is Ours! Tomorrow also is Ours!.

Vazhga Anna Naamam; Valarga Puratchi Thalaivar Pugazh; Thodarga Hon'ble Amma's Rule.

Nandri; Vanakkam.

Dedicating schemes to Thoothukudi District, Chief Minister recalls it always stood by Puratchi Thalaivar, Amma

Speech of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami** at the centenary function of M.G.R. at Thoothukudi on 22.11.2017 (*English Translation*).

I bow to Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, the guardian of the fishermen community, a scholar, hailed by even superpowers, a leader with the courage of rationalist leader Periyar, the torchbearer of Perarignar's policy and a find of Puratchi Thalaivar.

Hon'ble Speaker of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Thiru. P. Dhanapal, who has delivered the presidential address, Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister Thiru. O.Panneerselvam, Hon'ble Deputy Speaker of the Lok Sabha, who has given a special address, Hon'ble Minister for Information and Publicity Thiru.Kadambur Raju, Secretary of the Department of Tamil Development and Information Thiru. R.Venkatesan, Hon'ble Ministers, Thiru. J.Jeyasingh Thiyagaraj Natterji, MP, Srivaikuntam MLA Thiru. S.P.Shanmuganathan, Hon'ble Deputy Speaker of the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly Thiru. Pollachi V. Jayaraman, Tamil Nadu Government's Special Representative at New Delhi Thiru. N.Thalavai Sundaram, Chairperson of the Tamil Nadu Textbooks and Education Services Corporation Tmt. B.Valarmathi, Chairman of the Tamil Nadu Housing Board Thiru. P.K.Vairamuthu, Thoothukudi District Collector Thiru. N.Venkatesh, who is to propose a vote of thanks, former Ministers, MPs, MLAs, former MPs, former MLAs, representatives of co-operative institutions, former representatives of local bodies, Tamils living in Malaysia, party cadres, who are the aerial roots of the party, Government staff, respective elders, ladies, youth and beneficiaries of welfare assistance, representatives of print and visual media I pay my respects to you all at the outset.

The name Thoothukudi has come to this town as it is filled with 'oothu' (springs) where harbour and dwellings (kudi) are formed. Greek traveller Ptolemy called Thoothukudi as Muthukulikarai and James Colonel as Thouthukarai. Since it is internationally famous for sea trade and pearl diving it is also called Muthunagar. Thoothukudi is known for fishing, pearl fishing, chunk trade and salt manufacturing. Here cotton and chillies are the major crops. The river Tamirabarani after flowing through Tirunelveli District merges into the sea at Thoothukudi.

Thoothukudi was under the control of various kings including Pandiyas, Cholas, Mohammedans, Naickers, the British, Portuguese, and the Dutch. One of the composers of the Carnatic Music Trinity, Muthuswami Dikshithar was born in the District.

'Sindhu Nadhiyin Misai Nilavinile, Chera Nan Naattu Ilam Pengaludane, Sundara Telugunil Pattisaithu Thonigal Otti Vilaiyadi Varuvom. Gangainadhipurathu Godhumai Pandam, Cauvery Vetrilaikku maru kolvom, Singa Maratiyar Tham Kavithai Kondu Serath Thanthangal parisu Alippom'…. So sang national poet Bharathi, who sowed the seeds of national integration among people of various States and regions of India. He was born in Ettayapuram in Thoothukudi District. Thoothukudi District also played a major role in the freedom movement and its soil is known for heroism. It was here that Veeran Sundaralingam, who turned into a suicide squad and blasted the explosive godown of the British and Veeran Alagumuthu Kone, who was tied to the mouth of a cannon and blasted for mobilizing people against the British Government, were born.

Veera Pandiya Kattabomman, who refused to oblige the British and was branded as a common enemy by them was hanged here. In the 20th Century, V.O.Chidambaram Pillai, after doing Pleader graduation in Tiruchi returned to Thoothukudi and started the fight for independence. V.O.Chidambaranar purchased two ships against the wishes of the British empire. Due to this he had to face a lot of difficulties. V.O.C. started Thoothukudi People's Movement in the company of nationalist leader Subramania Siva and Padmanabha Iyengar, to oppose the British Government. V.O.C. was accused of sedition by the British and sentenced to prison, where he was given severe punishment. He sacrificed his life for the motherland. After Independence, the then Governor General of India Rajaji inaugurated the Swadeshi Steam Shipping company in the name of V.O.Chidambaranar.

Tiruchendur, one of the six abodes of Lord Muruga, Panimaya Matha Church, Kazhugu Malai, Nava Tirupati, Mutharamman Temple in Kulesekara Pattinam, Meignanapuram Church, Vekkaliamman Temple in Sinthalakarai and Vana Tirupati are located here.

Historically important Manappad Chinna Nadu Salem, Vallanadu Black Buck Sanctuary, Korkai, Kattabomman fort, Ettayapuram, where Poet Bharathi was born, Kayatharu, where Kattabomman was hanged, Adichanallur, Vanchi Maniyachi, where Maaveeran Vanchinathan shot Ash durai dead, Bharathiyar House in Ettayapuram, Bharathiyar Memorial, the birthplace of V.O.Chidambaranar, Veeran Vellaiyathevan Memorial, Veeran Sundaralingam Memorial, Veeran Alagumuthu Kone Memorial. Poet Umarupulavar Memorial, Veerapandiyan Memorial, which are worth visiting, are all in the District. Thoothukudi Municipality which was formed in the year 1866 is one of the oldest Municipalities in Tamil Nadu.

Thoothukudi District was formed in the year 1986 as per the directions of the then Chief Minister Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R.

I am extremely happy to see that the people of Thoothukudi are celebrating the centenary celebration of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar as if it is their family celebration. Not only now, right from the beginning the people of Thoothukudi District are having very high respect and affection towards Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R.

It is not an exaggeration to say that the entire Thoothukudi District wore a festive look whenever M.G.R's films were released. At the time of the film release, everybody looked cheerful and rejuvenated. People bubbled with happiness and I can cite many instances for this.

In those days, Charles Theatre in Thoothukudi was the second biggest theatre in the State after Thangam Theatre in Madurai. In Charles Theatre, the M.G.R. film 'Ulagam Sutrum Valiban' was released on May 11, 1973. Only a year before the film's release, Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. launched his party, the AIADMK. Parties opposed to him vowed to eliminate M.G.R. and put all possible hindrances to stall the growth of the AIADMK. There were threats throughout Tamil Nadu to prevent even the screening of old films of Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. They threatened the fans of Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. with dire consequences and there was a situation

that the film ‘Ulagam Sutrum Valiban’ could not be released on the scheduled date.

Unperturbed by the threats, Puratchi Thalaivar fans of Thoothukudi District decided to make arrangements for screening the film in Charles Theatre after three days. But the opponents assembled in front of the theatre to prevent the film box from reaching the theatre. There was heavy crowd before the theatre and tickets were issued despite the film box not reaching the theatre. But within in a few minutes the show began with the title song by Sirkazhi Govindarajan (Namadhu Vetriyai Nalai Sarithiram Sollum; Ippadai Thorkin Eppadai Vellum) and amidst the thunderous applause of Puratchi Thalaivar fans.

The opponents were taken back as they could not believe that the film box had reached the theatre despite their attempts to prevent it. It was a history in the film industry as Ulagam Sutrum Valiban was the only film which was released without any posters and ran to packed houses. With the same spirit you are now supporting the Hon’ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. even after his demise.

With the blessings of Hon’ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, we, as cadres of the AIADMK, are serving the people. We have come here to fulfill the wishes of two great leaders of the AIADMK because you have unassailable faith in us and love for us.

The people of Thoothukudi District are a standing example to other Districts in their love and affection for Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. and that is why Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. wanted to meet the people of Thoothukudi immediately after taking charge as Chief Minister. A public meeting was arranged at Tharuvai ground where tens of thousands of people assembled to see and hear Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. As the ground was full, people were stopped outside the ground. Women, who came in large numbers from other Districts tried to enter the ground by scaling over the compound wall. To control the crowd, police were forced to use lathis.

When Puratchi Thalaivar came to know of the action of policemen he immediately asked the policemen to surrender their lathis to him. He did not hand over the lathis to the policemen till the end of the meeting. After the meeting, Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. fondly waved his hands towards the women before entering his car. Only after that were the lathis handed over to the policemen. This incident shows that Puratchi Thalaivar was

particular that women should not suffer at any cost. Puratchi Thalaivar always gave preference to women in all places. That was why M.G.R. selected Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma to head the AIADMK after his demise and gave political training to Amma.

I would like to mention one more instance that exhibited Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R's immense faith in women.

In 1962 Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar was travelling in his car near Bengaluru for a film shooting. The car had to stop near a village as a railway level crossing was closed. The villagers who saw Puratchi Thalaivar rushed towards the car and an old woman among them pleaded with Puratchi Thalaivar to come to her hut. Puratchi Thalaivar immediately obliged and went to her hut along with his assistants. The woman was very much moved by M.G.R.'s gesture and said she was really fortunate to have Puratchi Thalaivar in her house. So saying she offered M.G.R. a cup of milk. When M.G.R. was about to drink the milk, one of M.G.R.'s assistants intervened. After testing the milk by himself drinking it, he handed over the cup to M.G.R. After drinking the milk, Puratchi Thalaivar left the place as the railway gate had opened by then.

After sitting in the car, Puratchi Thalaivar asked the assistant whether he was so hungry as to snatch the milk cup from him. The assistant replied that he (Puratchi Thalaivar) used to drink anything given by people. What If they had mixed something in the milk? What would be his (M.G.R.) position then? The assistant added that only as a precautionary measure he had drunk the milk. The reply angered Puratchi Thalaivar. He asked, why at all should the woman give poison to him. He asked his assistant whether he knew the basic quality of a good leader. A leader should have faith in the people and people should have faith in him. This is the quality of Puratchi Thalaivar that has made us celebrate the centenary of the leader even 30 years after his demise.

Puratchi Thalaivi Amma also had the same affection and love for the people of Thoothukudi District. At this juncture I am reminded of

Puratchi Thalaivi Amma's speech on 14.03.2003 at a Government function in Sathankulam in Thoothukudi District. She said, "I came here on 26.02.2003 to canvass votes for my party candidate in the Assembly by-election. You responded to it by giving a massive victory to the AIADMK candidate. That showed your love and affection for me. The result was announced 01.03.2005. Exactly 13 days after the declaration of the result I came to Sathankulam to announce the implementation of various schemes, and distribute grants to beneficiaries. This is to show my gratitude to you".

Only Puratchi Thalaivi Amma could fulfill the poll promises within 13 days of election results. Both Puratchi Thalaivar and Puratchi Thalaivi Amma competed with each other to show their affinity towards the people of Thoothukudi. We, the followers of these two great leaders are now ruling the State.

With the blessings of Hon'ble Amma, I am going to inaugurate some of the completed schemes and lay the foundation for new schemes. I would like to share the details of some of the schemes with you. I have inaugurated 138 schemes worth Rs. 467 crore, including the completed schemes worth Rs.285 crore on behalf of the Thoothukudi Corporation.

Taking into consideration the drinking water needs of Thoothukudi District, Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma announced during the 2011 Assembly Elections that the people of Thoothukudi would get permanent drinking water supply. Work on the drinking water supply scheme which was started in the year 2013 at a cost of Rs.282 crore, has been completed and the same has been dedicated now to the people of the town. The assurance was given by Puratchi Thalaivi Amma in 2011 during her tour of the District after the people submitted demands for a permanent solution. Puratchi Thalaivi Amma accepted their

demands and the work on the drinking water supply scheme was started in 2013. Today, the total area of Thoothukudi Corporation is 90.66 sq.km and the population is 3.72 lakh. The present cost of the scheme is Rs.282.44 crore. For this scheme, water is being drawn from Maruthu Dam across River Tamirabarani and supplied to people in different parts of the Corporation. For the water supply, 20 new over-head tanks have been constructed and pipes have been laid for 502 km. Nearly 98 per cent of the works has been completed. Before the implementation of the scheme, water was supplied to people once in 8 days. With the 98 per cent implementation of the scheme, water is now supplied on pilot basis to people for three days in a week. I am happy to announce that soon daily water supply will be effected after the full completion of the scheme. Through the scheme, a total of 60,000 new connections will be given. Now 10,000 connections have been given. Within six months water will be supplied as per the requirement of the people. I am happy to announce that the scheme has been designed to provide 86 MLT to people.

Today, I also laid the foundation stone for 8 new schemes costing Rs.8.08 crore, including construction of a regulated market complex at a cost of Rs.6.46 crore. On behalf of various Departments, I will be disbursing welfare assistance worth Rs. 154.78 crore to 24,300 beneficiaries. From the day this Government took charge till date, I have inaugurated 35,571 scheme works costing Rs. 412.45 crore across the State, and laid foundations for 7,121 works costing Rs. 872.34 crore. Totally, 42,692 works worth Rs.16,285 crore are under implementation. I would like to list out some of the schemes implemented in Thoothukudi District during the last six years. I want to mention this as the Opposition leader is raising questions in every one of his meetings asking 'what schemes have been brought about by this Government for the welfare of the people'. As far as we are concerned we continue to implement the schemes left out by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. Apart from this, we are also meeting the demands submitted by the people through MPs, MLAs, and Hon'ble Ministers.

I wanted to list out the welfare schemes implemented for the people of the District. Under the marriage assistance scheme for educated women, Rs.95.78 crore has been given to 26,480 women besides 107.52 kg of gold to them. For the farmers whose yield was affected, drought relief to the tune of Rs. 90.20 crore has been distributed to 1,14,516 farmers. Through the Central Co-operative banks, crop loan worth Rs.38.72 crore has been distributed. Under the 'kudimaramathu scheme', 28 schemes have been undertaken costing Rs.2.38 crore. Under the scheme for free distribution of sediments to farmers, 13,70,580 cubic metres of sand have been given to benefit 10,950 farmers. At no cost, 63,000 laptops worth Rs.89.45 crore have been distributed to students. Under the Dr.Muthulakshmi Reddy Maternity Assistance scheme, Rs. 44.61 crore has been distributed to 49,100 pregnant women. Under the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Medical Insurance Scheme, medical treatment costing Rs. 104.46 crore has been given to 72,610 beneficiaries. Through Highways Department, 51 bridges, small bridges, over-bridges and roads to a length of 849 km have been constructed. Under the Slum Clearance Board 444 houses have been constructed at a cost of Rs. 29.15 crore. In Thoothukudi District 1,70,008 individual latrines have been constructed and Thoothukudi is the first District in the State to be free from open defecation. In Thoothukudi District,

various drinking water improvement schemes have been undertaken in 180 places at a cost of Rs.171.24 crore. On behalf of the Tamil Nadu Power Generation and Distribution Corporation 13 new power sub-stations have been set up at a cost of Rs.140.40 crore. Under the Chief Minister's Green House scheme 8,522 houses have been constructed at a cost of Rs. 140.40 crore. Under the Prime Minister Housing Scheme, 11,346 houses have been completed at a cost of Rs. 120.31 crore.

Under the integrated school infrastructure development scheme, renovation work has been taken up in 507 schools, of which 484 works have been completed. For this Rs.784 crore has been spent. Through Thoothukudi Corporation, in the last six years, 922 works have been completed at a cost of Rs.616.84 crore. Through the 'other scheme and general funds', a number of schemes worth Rs.81.30 crore have been completed to provide uniform supply of drinking water. As already mentioned by me, five Panchayats which are attached to Thoothukudi have been provided drinking water under the Thoothukudi Drinking Water Supply Scheme at a cost of Rs.282.44 crore.

The people of Tamil Nadu know that the Government has been functioning round-the-clock and has been announcing and implementing various welfare schemes worth several crores. The fast-moving wheels of a cart may seem to be motionless. At least after seeing the development and our hard work, Opposition leaders should stop issuing empty statements and rather work for the benefit of the people.

This can be well illustrated by a short story.

A fox had a desire to become the leader of a forest. For that, it thought it should get a good name among all animals in the forest. It could not get any idea of its own. So it consulted a bear. The bear said, "You and your group are known for giving suggestions to all animals in the forest. It is strange that you want to get suggestions from me". But the fox replied, "I want to become the leader immediately. Please tell me an idea". The bear said, "It is enough if you keep your mouth shut and do not howl frequently. Everybody will praise you if you do that". The fox replied, "It is my nature to howl and how can I stop howling and keep my mouth shut". The bear then said, "If it is not possible to stop howling then give food to animals which are hungry. Then all animals will praise you and you can become the leader". The fox felt that it was an excellent idea. The fox then carried some food on its back and went in search of hungry animals. It saw a rhino on the way. The fox told the rhino that it had brought food for it and asked it to take it. But the rhino said that he was not hungry, besides he was not feeling well. But the fox insisted on the rhino to take the food. Again and again the fox asked the rhino to take the food. The rhino got angry and said, "I have been telling you that I am not keeping good health but still you insist on my taking the food''. So saying, the rhino caught hold of the fox with its horns and threw it away. The fox got injured throughout its body. After the rhino left the place, the bear came that way. The fox told the bear, "You see what your advice had done to me". The bear said, "I asked you to give food to the animals which are hungry. But you tried to give food to the animal which was not well and was suffering from stomach pain. You have neither intelligence of your own nor practical knowledge. You can never become a leader'', said the bear.

Like that many people in Tamil Nadu want to become a leader and Chief Minister instantly. For this they get advice from wrong people and are moving in the wrong direction. I would like to tell them that they will meet the fate of the fox only.

The State Government, which is treading the path of Hon’ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, has been implementing various welfare schemes speedily. Even in the prevailing drought conditions, it is able to provide drinking water to the affected people. The Government formed committees consisting of Ministers and officers to meet the people in flood-affected areas and undertake relief works.

The Opposition leader has said that law and order situation was not good in the State. “It is amusing as it is far from the truth. Tamil Nadu is an oasis of peace. Some people thought that the party would split after the demise of Puratchi Thalaivi Amma and the Government would fall. Nothing of that sort happened. So they are spreading lies against the Government though the Press’’.

At the centenary celebrations of Ponmana Chemmal M.G.R., I made a comment that I and Hon’ble Deputy Chief Minister will function like a double barrelled gun. I said that we would work together. Why should Stalin got angry for this comment. Stalin commented about my statement at a meeting in Nellai. This shows how much he had been affected by the statement. Why should he get angry when we express our thought?

We have to be cautious. Their expectations have not succeeded. Hon’ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma said in the Assembly that the party would survive after her and the All India Anna DMK Government will continue to be in power for 100 years. In the same manner, the party will get strengthened. But these people dreamt that the AIADMK would not be there after Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, the Iyakkam would be decimated and the AIADMK Government would fall. But their dream did not come true. As their dreams failed to materialize they are uttering bundles and bundles of lies every day.

Our intentions and thoughts are to fulfill the dreams of Ponmana Chemmal Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R. and Puratchi Thalaivi Amma. I can say authoritatively that is also the goal of every AIADMK worker. I would like to say in this conference that the opposition could not even touch even a single AIADMK worker.

On this occasion I would like to point out how the law and order situation deteriorated during their rule. In the year 2006, Hindu Munnani organizer Kumarapandiyan was murdered in Tenkasi. In 2000, Sivagangai Municipality Chairman died in a bomb blast. In the same year DMK District president Poondi Kalaiselvan and Chengalpattu Municipality Vice-Chairman Kumar were killed. In 2008, Tiruvarur District Secretary of the BJP, Manickam and his father were murdered by a mercenary gang in Thanjavur District. In 2010, Venkatachalam, former Minister belonging to the AIADMK was done to death. In 2007, when Dinakaran newspaper published a survey report on who was the next political heir in the DMK, a rowdy gang that belonged to the DMK indulged in arson and set fire to the newspaper office leading to the death of three innocent employees. All these things happened during the DMK regime. I want to point out that people knew well what was the law and order situation in the State during that time.

Hon’ble Puratchi Thalaivi Government created a renaissance in School Education. Idaya Deivam Puratchi Thalaivi Amma gave priority to education. She was of the view a Country could prosper only if education was given priority. Now, one can see the prosperity of Tamil Nadu as the State is in the forefront in the Country in education. This Amma’s Government has created a record by allotting Rs. 26,932.31 crore for education.

From the current academic year, new education system is to be introduced to protect the future of students. In the current year, infrastructure will be improved in schools at a cost of Rs.391 crore. In the last six years about 37 lakh laptops have been distributed to students at no cost. Tamil Nadu is the pioneer in introducing the scheme, which is not in vogue in any other State. Puratchi Thalaivi Amma introduced the scheme with a long-term perspective that students should become experts in computer education. Only well-to-do students can purchase a laptop for Rs. 14,000/- and use it to get employment. But students belonging to the lower strata of society could not afford to purchase a laptop. For them to get science-based education the Government has distributed laptops costing Rs.14,000/- each to 37 lakh students. This credit goes to Amma only.

I am sure that our students will fondly remember even after many years that the scheme has been introduced by Puratchi Thalaivi Amma.

Similarly, in the education field, about 41,000 teachers, 4,400 lab assistants and 15,000 part-time teachers have been appointed in the last six years to provide quality education to students. So far 227 Primary Schools have been started, 116 Primary Schools have been upgraded as Middle Schools, 829 Middle Schools have been upgraded as High Schools, and 402 High Schools have been upgraded as higher secondary schools. By this Puratchi Thalaivi Amma has created a situation where even poor students have an access to Higher Education. In the last five years, Hon'ble Amma declared open 65 Government Arts and Science Colleges. The present Government which follows Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma opened 11 Arts and Science Colleges. Totally, 76 Arts and Science Colleges have been dedicated to the students of Tamil Nadu. Due to this enrollment of students in higher education has increased. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma had provided congenial atmosphere to enable students from the poor strata of society to go for higher education. Due to this the percentage of students in higher education which was 21 per cent when Puratchi Thalaivi took charge increased to 44.32 per cent in six years. During her term, Arts and Science Colleges, Medical Colleges, Veterinary Colleges, Agriculture Colleges, Law Colleges and Polytechnic Colleges have been opened. The enrolment of students in higher education in Tamil Nadu is the highest among all States in the Country. In the medical field also the State has created a record.

Under the 'Kudimaramathu' scheme 1,519 tanks have been selected for removal of sediments at a cost of Rs. 100 crore for providing water sources to farmers in Villages. In all tanks, kanmais, and small ponds, sediments have been removed with the co-operation of local farmers. The sediments are later distributed to farmers for using as base fertilizer. Due to removal of sediments, the depth of the tanks has increased thereby improving the capacity of the tanks. This has also improved the ground water level in and around these tanks.

Apart from this, steps are being taken to construct check dams wherever possible at a cost of Rs.1,000 crore in the last three years. The Government has started constructing check dams across rivers and ponds, to save rain water during monsoon. Due to this, rain water is getting stored and the groundwater level has increased thereby providing water for farming and drinking for the farmers.

Recently, the Opposition leader Thiru. M.K.Stalin made a remark against this Government. He gave wrong information regarding supply of eggs to children under the noon meal scheme. Under the Puratchi Thalaivar

Noon Meal Scheme, eggs are being given to 69.3 lakh children. For 16 lakh anganwadi children, eggs are being supplied twice a week. For 53.3 lakh school-going children eggs are given five times a week. For this scheme, eggs are being procured since 2012. Two days back, Thiru. Stalin issued a statement that the scheme had been dumped and that due to increase in prices of eggs, the Government had stopped the egg supply to students. This is totally contrary to facts. Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma Government is one that protects the poor and marginalized people. We will not stop supply of eggs to children who are from poor sections of the society at any cost. His statement is far from truth. He is trying to level unfounded charges against the Government.

The Minister belonging to this District has given some demands.

On the occasion of Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivar M.G.R's centenary celebrations, you are all happy and contented. Women, children, party workers, and the general public who have come to participate in the function should reach home safely. Then only I will be happy. Particularly those going by vehicles and by walk, should take care.

I convey my appreciation to the good hearts who have arranged this function so excellently. I take leave of you stating that this Government will continue to work as your servant. Yesterday was ours. Today is ours and Tomorrow will also be ours. Vaazhga Anna Naamam. Valarga Puratchi Thalaivar Pugazh and Thodarga Hon'ble Amma's Rule.

Special announcements made by the Hon'ble Chief Minister Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami for Thoothukudi District :

1. A new revenue division will be set up with Eral as headquarters.

2. Two veterinary sub-centres at Periaswamipuram and Akilandapuram in Kayatharu Panchayat Union.

3. A new shopping complex with vehicle parking facilities by modernizing the Thoothukudi V.O.C. Shandy with private participation.

4. Road development work will be undertaken in the newly attached Sankaperi, Milavettan, Thoothukudi rural, Muthiapuram, and Aththimarapatti of the Thoothukudi Corporation.

5. Sufficient employees will be appointed in Thoothukudi Corporation for urgent and necessary works.

6. A new godown with a capacity of 2,000 metric ton at a cost of Rs.2.40 crore will be set up at the Thoothukudi regulated market complex. Another godown with a capacity of 5,000 metric tonne costing Rs.6.25 crore will be set up at Pudur Regulated market.

7. A memorial will be constructed for Thiru. S.B.Sivanthi Adithanar at Tiruchendur and the work will commence in 2018-2019.

8. Manapad Beach will be developed as a tourist spot by undertaking road development works, providing drinking water and toilet facilities, vehicle parking, surveillance cameras, sign boards, retrieval boats, and gadgets for cleaning the beach.

9. Post-graduate courses will be started in the Thoothukudi Medical College after getting the necessary sanction from the Indian Medical Council.

10. Primary Health Centres will be established in Sivagnanapuram Village, and Vanaramutti Village in Kayatharu Panchayat Union.

11.Modern equipment will be supplied to Thoothukudi Government Medical College. Facilities will be made for treatment of Geriatric patients and those affected by lung diseases.

12. Dialysis and endoscopy equipment will be supplied to District headquarters medical hospital in Kovilpatti.

13. Modern eye testing and clinic will be established in Eral Government Hospital.

14. Additional infrastructure will be provided in Tiruchendur community health centre.

15. Extended primary health services will be provided in Karunkulam and Ottapidaram divisions.

16. Two check dams will be constructed across Vembaru in Periasamipuram in Vilathikulam and Vembaru Village.

17. A check dam will be constructed across River Tamirabarani in Vallanadu Village near Agaram in Srivaikundam Division.

18. A check dam across Karumeni river in Pallakurichi Village in Sattankulam division.

19. A small check dam will be constructed across Uppodai in Avudaiammal Village in Kovilpatti division.

20 and 21.Two check dams will be constructed across Uppodai one each in Chidambarampatti Village and Savalaperi Village in Kovilpatti division.

22.Four new power sub-stations will be set up one each at Udangudi, Chettikurichi, Arasari Village and Thoothukudi Beach Road.

23. A small bridge will be constructed on the Pottalurani - Perurani – Mangalagiri road.

24. A small bridge will be set up on the Meenakshipuram- Venkatachalapuram road.

25. A bridge will be constructed on the Kovilpatti- Kadaliyur-Muthalapuram-Perilovanpatti-Pillaiyarnatham road.

26. A high-level bridge on the Thisaiyanvilai – Udangudi road.

27. A high level bridge on the Kayatharu – Kazhugumalai road.

28. A high level bridge on the Pudur-Paralachi road.

29. A road over-bridge, at the railway level crossing gate no. 486 and a sub-way low level bridge at railway level crossing gate no. 487 between Milavattan and Thoothukudi railway stations.

30. Additional road over-bridge will be constructed on the Thoothukudi-Kollam road. A detailed project is being prepared for the scheme.

31. Bridge works will be taken near Padarthapuli.

32. Road development works will be undertaken for the Kovilpatti-Kumarapuram-Gopalapuram-Chettikurichi Road.

33. The road stretch from Kovilpatti railway station to Lakshmi Mills over bridge will be expanded into four lane road.

34. Land acquisition work will be taken up for laying a new road running parallel to Milavattan-Maniyachi railway line to enable passengers of Thoothukudi Corporation to make use of more than 15 north-bound trains at Maniyachi station.

Chief Minister opens railway subway, dedicates nine river bridges for public use

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami at the Secretariat on 04.01.2018, declared open a Railway subway, 9 river bridges and one limited railway subway on behalf of the Highways and Minor Ports Department in Tiruppur, Chennai, Salem, Dharmapuri, Coimbatore, Karur, and Virudhunagar Districts, all constructed at a total cost of Rs.69.45 crore and dedicated the bridges for public use.

Road infrastructure plays a key role in the socio-economic development of a State. Realizing the importance of road infrastructure, the State Government, treading the path laid down by the Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, is constructing new bridges, based on requirement, laying quality roads wherever necessary, and maintaining the road and bridges properly.

In this connection, a railway subway has been constructed at a cost of Rs.27.68 crore at Kongu Nagar in Tiruppur District to replace a railway level crossing to relieve traffic congestion.

In Govindampalayam in Salem District, a road bridge across Vashista River at a cost of Rs.6.21 crore, and another bridge across the River Periyar in Periyathumedu at a cost of Rs.2 crore, in Palayam in Dharmapuri District, a bridge across a 'odai' at a cost of Rs.1.52 crore, in Athipalayam in Coimbatore District, a bridge across River Kousika at a cost of Rs.3.15 crore, and in Sindilip, a bridge across a forest river at a cost of Rs.2.35 crore have been constructed.

In Amainthakarai in Chennai District a bridge across River Cooum at a cost of Rs.11.10 crore, in Vayalur in Karur District, a bridge across a 'odai' at a cost of Rs.2.59 crore, at Kuppanmpatti a bridge across Kuppanampatti odai at a cost of Rs.1.36 crore, and another bridge at Kalingapatti at a cost of Rs.94 lakh;

A limited railway sub-way on the Virudhunagar-Aruppukottai Road at Allampatti in Virudhunagar District replacing a railway level-crossing.

Totally a Railway subway, 9 river bridges and one limited railway subway all costing Rs.69.45 crore have been declared open for the public use by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami on 04.01.2018.

On the occasion, Hon'ble Minister for Co-operation Thiru. Sellur K.Raju, Hon'ble Minister for Revenue and Disaster Management Thiru. R.B.Udhaya Kumar, Hon'ble Minister for Information Technology Dr.M.Manikandan, Chief Secretary (FAC) Thiru. K.Shanmugam, I.A.S., Principal Director for the Highways Department Thiru. R.Kothandaraman, Chief Engineer, Highways (NABARD and Rural roads) Thiru. M.K.Selvan and High Government Officials were present.

Tamil Nadu speaks up against merger of ICAR institutes

D.O. letter dated 04.12.2017 addressed by **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami**, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to **Shri Narendra Modi**, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India.

"In continuation of my earlier DO letters dated 23.11.2017 and 24.11.2017, addressed to the Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare based on the representations received from the Chennai based Agricultural Research Scientists Forum and media reports, I would like to bring to your notice that three Premier Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) Institutes namely a) Sugarcane Breeding Institute functioning at Coimbatore, b) National Research Centre for Banana functioning at Tiruchirappalli and c) Central Institute of Brackish water Aquaculture (CIBA) functioning at Chennai, are likely to be closed or merged with other ICAR Institutes across the Country.

In this regard, the Sugarcane Breeding Institute, Coimbatore has been serving the farming community since 1912. The sugarcane varieties released by this Institute are very popular among sugarcane growers of not only Tamil Nadu, but also in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Gujarat, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh. With an aim to increase the cane yield / high sugar recovery and to enable better remuneration to the Sugarcane growers, the Government of Tamil Nadu is keen that the Sugarcane Breeding Institute, Coimbatore is not closed or merged with other ICAR Institutions.

The National Research Centre for Banana established in 1993 at Tiruchirappalli, is contributing very significantly in increasing the production and productivity of banana so as to meet the growing demand of our varieties in India and abroad. The R&D work and research station is of immense importance. Tamil Nadu stands first in banana production and export. The co-ordination and handholding support extended by the Banana Research Institute, Tiruchirappalli is acknowledged by the Government of Tamil Nadu. I, therefore, request you not to close or merge this Institute with other ICAR Institutions.

I would like to inform you further that CIBA, Chennai provides regular technical support to Tamil Nadu and all other coastal States especially in brackish water aquaculture. As you may be aware lakhs of people in Tamil Nadu are engaged directly or indirectly in cultivation of Vennamei shrimp, which has boosted the economic contribution of Tamil Nadu Fisheries sector considerably. The continuous handholding support of such a premier institution to aquaculture farmers

is inevitable in sustaining the aquaculture production of the State. Import and quarantine of Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) mother shrimps are allowed by Government of India only through the Chennai International Airport. Due referral services for pathogens are being provided by ICAR-CIBA to DADHDF, Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India and to the aquaculture community of the whole country. Now, aquaculture is blossoming into sustainable livelihood option for fishermen in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, that too along 1,076 Km long coast line of Tamil Nadu, which has 56,000 hectares of potential brackish water area.

In the above circumstances, the closure or merger of the said ICAR Institutes namely Sugarcane Breeding Institute at Coimbatore, National Research Centre for Banana, Tiruchirappalli and Central Institute of Brackishwater Aquaculture (CIBA) at Chennai will have a detrimental impact on the interest of the farmers and fisher folk of Tamil Nadu. In this regard, I have already addressed the Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers Welfare to help in retaining these Premier Institutes as such. Decision in this regard is still awaited.

Now, I reiterate my demand for your kind consideration and request you to kindly issue necessary instructions to Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare to continue the activities of these prestigious Institutes to function as such without closure or merger with other institutions, in order to safeguard the interest of farmers and fisher folk of Tamil Nadu".

NEWS IN PICTURE

Australian Consul General for India Mr.Sean Kelly and the Deputy Consul General Mr. Jon Bonnar made a courtesy call on the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami** at the Secretariat on 05.01.2018. Chief Secretary (full additional charge) Thiru. K.Shanmugam I.A.S., Secretary for Public Department Dr.P.Senthil Kumar I.A.S. and other high Government officials were present.

‘Make proper use of welfare schemes to make Tamil Nadu a prosperous State’

New year message of the Hon’ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu
Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami
on 31.12.2017 *(English Translation).*

“On this pleasant day when the New Year dawns with a new lustre, I am happy to extend my hearty new year greetings to all the people of Tamil Nadu.

Hon’ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma worked tirelessly for the growth of Tamil Nadu with the determination to make Tamil Nadu the foremost State in India by framing and implementing schemes that fulfill the expectations of the people, executing many welfare schemes for women and putting in hard work to banish poverty altogether.

The Tamil Nadu Government that treads the path of Hon’ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma is implementing different welfare schemes for the welfare and prosperity of the people of Tamil Nadu. In this new year, I request you all to make proper use of these schemes and work in unison to create a prosperous Tamil Nadu.

Wishing that the New Year blossom into a year that brings in new riches and welfare, I convey to all the people of Tamil Nadu my hearty New Year good wishes once again.

Government stands by farmers on procurement price

Besides taking steps for increasing agricultural production so that farmers can prosper, the Tamil Nadu Government is also at the task of ensuring that farmers get the appropriate price for the produce. Hence, it is fixing and issuing a price for paddy every year higher than the procurement price fixed by the Central Government.

For the current procurement season (2017 – 2018), the Central Government has fixed the minimum statutory price for the fine variety paddy at Rs.1,590/- per quintal and at Rs.1,550/- for the common variety. In the interest of farmers, the Tamil Nadu Government has ordered to give additionally as an incentive Rs.70/- for the fine variety of paddy and Rs.50/- for the common variety. Accordingly, the price for paddy is fixed at Rs.1,660/- per quintal for the fine variety and at Rs.1,600/- for the common variety.

Under the Central Government’s decentralized paddy procurement scheme, the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation has planned to open 1,564 direct procurement centres and procure 20 lakh tonnes of paddy. I have advised the opening of more such centres if need be. Accordingly, I have directed the District Collectors to open direct procurement centres at the places of farmers’ choice, barring the Districts of Chennai and Nilgiris.

This will facilitate farmers to sell their paddy at the direct procurement centres at the price fixed by the Tamil Nadu without journeying long distances. This step of mine, will greatly benefit the farmers.

Free dhoti, sarees distribution begins

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami at the Secretariat in Chennai on 04.01.2018 inaugurated the distribution of dhotis and sarees at no cost for Pongal festival for the year 2018, by handing over the dhotis and sarees to 7 family members as a token. Under the scheme 1,56,05,630 sarees and 1,56,17,168 dhotis costing Rs.484.25 crore will be distributed to beneficiaries.

The distribution of free dhotis and sarees scheme was launched in the year 1983 by the then Chief Minister Puratchi Thalaivar Dr.M.G.R to provide employment throughout the year for handloom weavers thereby enhancing their living standards. Under the scheme every year during Tamilar festival Pongal dhotis and sarees are being distributed to beneficiaries at no cost. The scheme benefits not only the poor people but gives employment opportunities to handloom and power loom weavers throughout the year.

The State Government, functioning on the lines of Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, is to distribute this year, 1,56,05,630 sarees and 1,56,17,168 dhotis costing Rs.484.25 crore to the beneficiaries. As a token of inauguration of the scheme, the Hon'ble Chief Minister Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami handed over the dhotis and sarees at no cost to seven families.

The Hon'ble Minister for Handlooms and Textiles Thiru. O.S.Manian, Hon'ble Minister for Revenue and Disaster Management Thiru. R.B.Udhaya Kumar, Chief Secretary (FAC) Thiru. K.Shanmugam I.A.S., Secretary, Revenue and Disaster Management Department Dr. Chandra Mohan B. I.A.S., Principal Secretary for Handlooms, Handicrafts, Textiles and Khadi Thiru. Phanindra Reddy I.A.S., Principal Secretary and Commissioner of Revenue Administration Dr.K.Satyagopal I.A.S., Chennai District Collector Thiru. V.Anbuselvan I.A.S., and High Government Officials were present on the occasion.

Plea to Prime Minister to declare Ockhi cyclone a National disaster

D.O. letter dated 07.12.2017 addressed by **Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami**, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu to **Shri Narendra Modi**, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India.

You are aware that the very severe Cyclonic Storm "OCKHI" has caused intense as well as extensive damages to Kanniyakumari District.

Kanniyakumari District has a dense population of fishermen, who actively pursue deep sea fishing. There are about 5,759 Motorized Fishing Crafts and 1,229 Mechanized Fishing Boats operating from Kanniyakumari District. Around 600 Mechanized Fishing Boats go for multiday deep sea fishing voyages. These boats had ventured into sea from our Country's various fishing bases located in the western coast for multiday fishing, long before the onset of depression. Hence, the alert about the depression and subsequent "OCKHI" cyclone could not be communicated to these fishermen, who were fishing in deep sea. Motorized traditional craft fishermen who were out at sea early in the morning of 29.11.2017 before the warning was issued, were also severely affected by the cyclonic storm "OCKHI".

Based on the information received from the Government of Tamil Nadu, local fishermen and relatives of the missing fishermen, Indian Navy, Indian Air Force and Indian Coast Guard carried out search and rescue operations. I sincerely appreciate the support and services rendered by our Defence forces in the search and rescue operations. I also had a meeting with the local Defence Chiefs and have requested them to continue the search and rescue operations till the last fisherman is rescued. I request you to direct the Ministry of Defence to continue the intense search and rescue operations along the Arabian sea coast and deep sea from Kanniyakumari up to Gujarat and Maldives.

The States of Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Gujarat have provided shelter and assistance to a large number of Tamil Nadu fishermen and fishing boats and the Government of Tamil Nadu is very thankful to them for their kind gesture.

I would also like to bring to your kind notice that the magnitude of the damages to power infrastructure, agriculture including horticulture and plantation crops, road networks, fisheries infrastructure, drinking water supply etc., in Kanniyakumari District is humongous, requiring intervention by Government of India. As an immediate measure, the "OCKHI" cyclone that severely affected Kanniyakumari District may be declared as a "National Disaster" and necessary financial assistance may be provided for restoration of the infrastructure that was left in tatters by the gusting winds and torrential rains. Government of Tamil Nadu swung into immediate action to restore normalcy in the District, as well as initiated a detailed assessment of the various damages. A detailed memorandum will be submitted to the Government of India separately. However, in this hour of crisis, we need your immediate benevolent support.

Pongal gift scheme inaugurated

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami at the Secretariat on 05.01.2018 inaugurated the distribution of Pongal gift pack of one kg each of rice and sugar, 20 gms each of cashew nuts and raisins, 5 grams of cardamom, and two-foot sugarcane bit to 1.84 crore rice card holders, Police families having Police ration card, and Sri Lankan Tamils living in refugees camps. As a token, he handed over the gift pack to seven beneficiaries.

Every year during the Pongal festival, the State Government, following the path laid down by Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma, distribute rice, sugar, cashew nuts, raisins, and sugarcane at no cost to ration card-holders to enable the poor and marginalized to celebrate the festival. Rice card holders, Policemen having the Police ration card, and refugees living in refugee camps are eligible for the Pongal gift and the gift pack will be distributed to the beneficiaries before the Pongal festival, said the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami on 29.12.2017. For this Pongal gift, the State Government has allotted Rs.210 crore.

As a mark of distribution of the Pongal gift, Hon'ble Chief Minister Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami handed over the gift pack and conveyed his Pongal greetings to people on the occasion. The Pongal gift pack scheme, launched by the Hon'ble Chief Minister today, will be inaugurated tomorrow by Hon'ble Ministers and Collectors of respective Districts.

The Hon'ble Minister for Co-operation Thiru. Sellur K.Raju, Hon'ble Minister for Food Thiru. R.Kamaraj, Chief Secretary (FAC) Thiru. K.Shanmugam I.A.S., Principal Secretary for Food and Consumer Protection Thiru. Kumar Jayant I.A.S., Registrar of Co-operatives Thiru. A.Gnanasekaran I.A.S., Additional Registrar (Consumer Affairs) Thiru. G.K.Arun Sundar Dayalan I.A.S., Deputy Secretary for Food and Consumer Protection Tmt. S.Valarmathi I.A.S., and Higher Government Officials were present on the occasion.

‘Groundwater level up due to monsoon, kudimaramathu’

Speech of the Hon’ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu **Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami** after declaring open the completed schemes under the Athur, Gangaivalli, and Yercaud Constituencies *(English Translation).*

The groundwater level has improved during the current monsoon in the State thanks to Government’s Kudimaramathu scheme and free distribution of alluvial soil. The Hon’ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma Government meets the immediate requirement and the future needs of the people in the State.

The Hon’ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu distributed Government’s welfare assistance to beneficiaries after declaring open the completed schemes under the Attur, Gangaivalli, and Yercaud Constituencies at a function at Kongu Vellalar Thirumana Mandapam in Attur Iyyampalayam in Salem District on 02.01.2018. Salem District Collector, Tmt. Rohini R.Bhajibhakare I.A.S., presided over the function.

Salem MP Thiru. V.Panneerselvam, Namakkal MP Thiru. P.R.Sundaram, Kallakurichi MP Thiru. K.Kamaraj, MLAs Thiru. G.Venkatachalam, Thiru. S.Vetrivel, Thiru. S.Raja, Thiru. R.M.Chinnathambi and Thiru. A.Maruthamuthu, and the Chairman of the State Apex Co-operative Bank Thiru. R.Ilangovan participated in the function.

Addressing the gathering after distributing the welfare assistance and inaugurating the completed schemes the Hon’ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu said:

assistance worth Rs.5 lakh to 5 beneficiaries; under Horticulture Department, assistance to the tune of Rs.14 lakh to 100 beneficiaries; through Housing Co-operatives Rs.63 lakh to 9 beneficiaries; through Forest Department, assistance to the tune of Rs.6 lakh to 58 beneficiaries; and under the Differently-Abled Department, Rs.2.2 lakh to 10 beneficiaries.

Hon'ble Puratchi Thalaivi Amma introduced distribution of gold for the marriage of poor and marginalized women and implemented the scheme successfully. Earlier under the scheme, four grams of gold was given to poor woman for making mangal sutra, which was increased to 8 grams. Similarly, the marriage assistance was raised to Rs.50,000/- from Rs.25,000/-. In the last six years, under the marriage assistance scheme, 35,555 women benefited in Salem District. In continuation of the scheme, today gold worth Rs. 124 lakh is to be distributed to 1,000 poor women along with welfare assistance on behalf of the Social Welfare Department.

The following is the welfare assistance given by various Departments -- On behalf of the Rural Development Department, welfare assistance worth Rs.26 lakh to 1,500 beneficiaries; under Revenue Department, welfare assistance worth Rs.129 lakh to 978 beneficiaries; under Tribal Welfare Department, free pattas to 60 beneficiaries; under the Co-operative Department, welfare assistance to the tune of Rs.118 lakh to 319 beneficiaries; under Agriculture Department, welfare assistance worth Rs.105 lakh to 320 beneficiaries; through Agriculture Engineering Department

I am happy to inform that totally welfare assistance to the tune of Rs.9.36 crore were distributed to 4,359 beneficiaries on the occasion.

I am also happy to inaugurate 12 schemes worth Rs.109 lakh on behalf of Rural Development Department, 4 completed schemes costing Rs.165 lakh on behalf of the Co-operative Department and 2 completed works worth Rs.194 lakh on behalf of the Agriculture Department, totally 18 works worth Rs.4.68 crore.

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K.Palaniswami said that he was happy to inform that thanks to present rains in the State, the ground water level has improved substantially thanks to Kudimaramathu scheme and free distribution of alluvial soil. The present Amma Government is always taking into consideration the welfare people and has been implementing schemes to meet the immediate needs of the people and the future requirements of the people, the Hon'ble Chief Minister added.

Tamil Nadu's e-governance policy launched

The Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Thiru. Edappadi K. Palaniswami released at the Secretariat on 02.01.2018, the e-governance policy 2017. The first copy was received by the Hon'ble Minister for Information Technology Dr. M. Manikandan. The policy contains standards and guidelines for the implementation of e-governance schemes in line with the Government Vision 2023 to stabilize provision of Government services to people near their places of residence itself by utilizing Information Technology in Government Departments.

The long term aim of this e-governance policy is to provide Government services to people through the digital mode, common service centres and through mobile apps. before the year 2023 and also to improve Government's reliability, transparency and efficiency. It will also give guidelines for the effective use of the comprehensive IT infrastructure developed in Tamil Nadu for the e-governance initiatives of Government Departments. This will enable Government Departments, general public, Government staff and commercial establishments to get Government services in digital mode without any interruptions.

The policy has as its inner core the National standards and policies fixed by the Central Government. It will stabilize the metadata standards, open source software use, Tamil computing standards, the framework among computer-software-data, the standards, portability and inter-operability.

Through the integrated use of the IT infrastructure in the State by Government Departments, productivity will increase and expenditure on computer repairs will come down. The policy also paves way for an allocation of 0.5 per cent by Government Departments for e- governance schemes in the first phase from their yearly budgetary allotments and increase it gradually to 3 per cent within 5 years.